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ABSTRACT

When educators lack the knowledge, understanding and acceptance of their students' language and culture, especially when it differs from their own, a huge mismatch can and often does occur between school and home. What happens to African American children who are raised speaking Black English but schooled in standard English? How do teachers help students who differ from the mainstream mediate socio-cultural tensions and navigate demands of two cultures and speech communities? This qualitative study examines the socio-cultural context of language, diglossia, and diversity in two fourth/fifth grade, predominantly African American classrooms in Waterloo, Iowa. A nesting design was selected for this study to situate Black language interactions within each classroom, the school district, the Waterloo communities and language classification in American society at large. The ethnographic techniques of participant observation, audiotaping, and interviewing were used to collect data. Historical data was collected to understand the historical and political contexts of the African-American community in this city as it connects to the Delta of Mississippi as well as to larger society. The code-switching and diglossia of four focal students was given particular focus to understand children's negotiation of the language demands of several communities. Data analysis led to three major categories: inventing classroom culture, language choice decisions, and culturally-relevant pedagogy. This investigation suggests that certain strategies employed by two teachers facilitate the language learning of the African American students they teach: teachers' attitude of acceptance, a direct behavior management style, the use of antiphonal response, code-switching, acceptance of standard English approximations, and recognition of the verbal nature of many African American students. Based on James Banks' theory about multicultural education, a language equity pedagogy model was developed from the study's findings. This model explains how two speech communities, one Black English-speaking and the other standard English-speaking, overlap in the classroom and demand a pedagogy that meets the specific language and culture needs of these students. (Contains 131 references, and 15 tables and 8 figures of data. Appendixes contain a summary of distinct linguistic features of Black English, the "Oakland Resolution," a list of distinctive African American cultural expressions often at odds with

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school culture, mission statements of two schools, and interview questions for the four focal students.) (Author/RS)

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INVENTING CULTURALLY RELEVANT
PEDAGOGY IN TWO FOURTH/FIFTH-GRADE COMBINATION
CLASSROOMS:
DIVERSITY AND DIGLOSSIA AMONG BLACK ENGLISH SPEAKERS

by

Margaret-Mary Martine Sulentic

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education
(Elementary) in the Graduate College of The
University of Iowa

May 1999

Thesis supervisor: Associate Professor Kathryn F. Whitmore

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Iowa City, Iowa

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PH. D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph. D. thesis of

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Abstract approved: ______________________________
Thesis supervisor

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Title and department

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Date

This work is dedicated to my mother, Dorothy Josephine Baumann Sulentic Sullivan, and my father, Robert Nicholas Sulentic (1924-1970). I honor my mother for the daily example of her wisdom and my father for the gift of wisdom he has given from afar.

Wherever you turn, wisdom will guide you.
Proverbs 6:22

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Scenario

"Mz. Sulentic," he paused briefly until I looked up from my writing. "I got to use it."

Startled at the interruption, I looked up at Antonio. It was a chilly winter afternoon in 1984, and I was in the midst of conducting a writing workshop with one of my groups of seventh graders. Everyone was busy writing, including me, when Antonio approached me. I was perplexed at his request.

"Use what?" I asked, thinking that he probably needed a pen and wanted to use the one I had in my hand.

He repeated himself, a little louder and firmer this time "I *got* to use it." He shifted back and forth, looking straight at me.

Still thinking that he wanted to borrow a pen, I gestured toward the coffee can I kept full of pens sitting on my desk. "Use one of those. I'm using this one," I responded.

Antonio frowned, staring at me intently. "Mz. Sulentic, I *said* I got to use it. *NOW!*" His voice was louder, deeper, more insistent this time.

I tried to keep my voice even, "I heard you, and I said to use another." He stared at me. Then he turned and looked at the class, rolling his eyes. He swung back around and gave me a side-ways glance. I stared back. "Sit down!"

Antonio slowly made his way back to his desk. He sat down hard, making noise as he dropped into his seat, drawing the attention of most of the class. He mumbled something I could not hear, but I knew it was something out-of-line when those sitting closest to him exclaimed out loud and stared. The class grew restless. The tension was palpable. Antonio tore a sheet from his spiral notebook and crumpled it into a tight paper ball. He held it in his hand rhythmically squeezing it while he glared at me.

Everyone around him tried to ignore him, scurrying to look or act busy. I stared at my own paper but was unable to write. I was bewildered at his actions.

The remaining few minutes of class were quiet, but restless. Few students wrote. The mood had been broken by the exchange, but I could not figure out what had actually happened.

Who you are, your background and your experiences will probably color your response to this scenario. It is a possibility that if you are White, you may be just as perplexed at Antonio's words and actions as I was. If you are Black, you just might be wondering what was wrong with me on that wintry afternoon so long ago.

At lunch I shared my experience with Charles, a colleague who happens to be African American. He smiled as I told my story, and then tried to look serious, nodding as I continued. By the time I finished my account, I could tell he was struggling to keep his composure. Finally, unable to contain himself, he burst out laughing. I stood watching him laugh, feeling as confused by his response as I was with Antonio's. Charles caught himself and quit laughing.

"He wanted to use the bathroom," he told me quietly. "That's all."

I was appalled at my own ignorance and furious at myself for the way I had handled the incident. My lack of knowledge about and understanding of Antonio's language escalated a simple misunderstanding into an incident. I felt defeated, like I had let Antonio down.

Like a traveler in a foreign land, this exchange with Antonio started me on a journey of understanding, acceptance and knowledge. A personal journey.

According to Asa Hilliard (1996), Lisa Delpit (1995), and Janice Hale-Benson (1986), a huge mismatch can and often does occur when educators lack the knowledge, understanding and acceptance of their students' language and culture, especially when it differs from their own. What happens then, to children who are raised with one language system but schooled in another? How do children maneuver in American society with a home language that differs significantly from the mainstream majority? Who helps the child mediate or navigate between two worlds? These questions provide the framework of this investigation.

Purpose and Description of the Study

This is a qualitative study that examines the sociocultural context of language, diglossia and diversity in two classrooms. Specifically, it is an investigation of how two teachers, one Black and the other White, address Black English, facilitate code switching and validate the use of Black English in the school setting. Secondly, this study explores how Black English-speaking children use language, code switch and acquire standard English in their classroom.

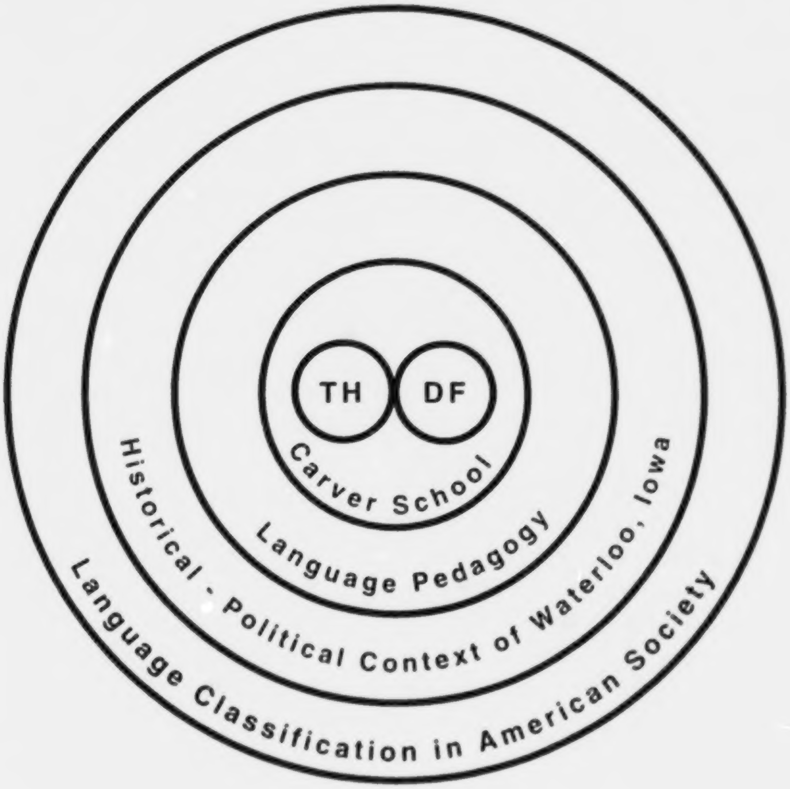
The fourth-fifth grade multi-age classrooms that provide the research site for my study are located at Carver Elementary in Waterloo, Iowa. For purposes of anonymity, I have chosen to give the school a pseudonym. However, I deemed it necessary to retain the correct name of the city due to the historical connections presented.

I wanted to conduct a study at Carver for a number of reasons. First of all, I feel that research generated by individual teachers to gain insight about students' language is much needed within the Waterloo school system. Having invested so much of my career as an educator in the district, and being a parent of children enrolled in the district, stirred a sense of responsibility within me. I knew Carver and the district, and I felt that language studies conducted in Waterloo could greatly inform teachers, parents and the system as a whole. Secondly, the remarkable make up of Carver Elementary's population was intriguing to me as a researcher. Carver's student population is 72.6% African American. Given the fact that the Waterloo school system has a student population that is 27% African American (*Basic Education Data Survey*, 1994) in a state where African American students comprise 7.3% of the total public school population (Santiago, 1996), Carver is a very unique and rich data collection site. Finally, I chose Carver because of the ease with which I could gain entrée into the two fourth-fifth grade combination classrooms. I had taught with both teachers at Carver and both had been my son's teacher. We trusted each other and respected each other as teaching colleagues. I had assumptions about their classrooms and about how both educators taught. My own teaching experiences at Carver helped me to formulate my proposed study of language.

A nesting design was selected for this study to illustrate the sociocultural context of school language and culture. I investigated how two educators address the issues of language diversity, including diglossia, to their classroom instruction. I also explored the experiences of the students in these two different yet similar classrooms, focusing on one student in particular. I examined the language interactions within each classroom as well as viewed the classrooms in the context of the school itself, the school district, the community in which they are located and American society at large. Most importantly, I situated these local classrooms in their historical and political contexts by understanding the roots of the African American Waterloo community in the Delta of Mississippi as well as the experience of selected African American community members in the larger Waterloo society.

"Classrooms can be thought of as embedded within a series of concentric circles representing aspects of the social and cultural environment in which interaction within the classroom takes place" (Wilcox, 1982, p. 275). A micro-ethnographic stance allows a view of the specific dynamics and context of the classroom while the macro-ethnographic stance examines the classroom within a sociocultural context that impacts the classroom (Wilcox, 1982; Whitmore & Crowell, 1994). Figure 1 illustrates the particular nesting design of this study.

This nesting design recognizes that the two classrooms in this study operate as unique systems or units within the shared sociocultural contexts of the school, the school district and the Waterloo community and the historical-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Carver School
Language Pedagogy
Historical - Political Context of Waterloo, Iowa
Language Classification in American Society

Figure 1. Layers of the Sociocultural Context

political context of society at large (Wilcox, 1982; Whitmore & Crowell, 1994). The classrooms exist as separate units, yet they are an integral part of Carver Elementary School. Carver is one of fourteen K-5 elementary buildings within the Waterloo Community School District. The community of Waterloo, Iowa, is home to 80,000 residents, 12% who are African American (1990 Census). Located in the northeastern corner of Iowa, Waterloo is surrounded by rolling farmland and is heavily invested in agriculture.

As an educational researcher I examined the roles of teachers who assist children as they mediate the demands of living in two worlds that require two distinct language systems. Through the use of the nest design a deeper understanding of language and culture is offered. Questions pertinent to this study were formulated to focus on the tensions that arise when African American children who speak Black English as their primary discourse or "home language" are expected to acquire and use standard English in the school setting.

Study Questions

1. Given the assumption that the majority of African-American fourth- and fifth-grade students at Carver speak Black English in their primary discourse, how is curriculum and language use situated within the sociocultural, historical and political context of

the Waterloo Community Schools Waterloo, Iowa, and within the Waterloo, Iowa community?

2. Why do two teachers in two fourth-fifth grade combination classrooms in one elementary school use particular teaching strategies to validate Black English while simultaneously facilitating acquisition of standard English?
3. How does these two teachers' knowledge of Black English and knowledge of their individual students affect their practice?
4. What are the educational implications in the area of language arts for children who use two forms of language to navigate the demands of their respective, contrasting sociolinguistic speech communities?

Before I can attempt to answer these questions, I need to ask a bigger question. What is language?

What Is Language?

Children are raised learning and speaking the language of their homes and communities. Larry Andrews (1993) asserts that children acquire language "indirectly and implicitly from their culture" including "patterns of pronunciation and syntax [that] are part of the surrounding linguistic atmosphere" (pp. 176-177). In a great number of African American families within the Black community of Waterloo, Iowa, that language is Black English. Like any other language, Black English is a cultural marker, emblematic to those speakers who "view" the language of the majority of African Americans as both a common bond among African Americans and as distinct from the language of the White, mainstream culture.

Views on Black English are complex and continually shifting. A wide spectrum of opinion exists regarding how best to define Black English. Is it a viable language? A vernacular? A dialect, or what some call an example of "poor English?" Divergent opinions also exist regarding who speaks Black English, claiming it as a "home language" or primary discourse.

For the purpose of clarity in this study, the following terms are briafly defined. Language, which is derived from the Old French term "language" and the Latin word "lingua," is defined as the systematic means of communicating ideas through words, and the specific methods of combining them, that is used and understood by a large group of people (*Webster's New Students Dictionary*, 1969). Joey Lee Dillard (1972) defines the following terms. Acrolect, coined by William A. Stewart, is a term used for the collection of linguistic features that carry the most prestige and status among a community of given speakers. Basilect, also credited to Stewart, is the opposite of Acrolect as it is the collection of linguistic features given the least amount of prestige and status in a community of speakers (Dillard, 1972). In America, standard English, most often associated with the White, middle income mainstream is an example of an acrolect. The language of power, according to Delpit (1995), is standard English, and it is the dominant language of favor or prestige in America. Conversely, in Great Britain, Cockney, the dialect of London's East End is a prime example of a basilect. In America, some people view dialects and varieties of English such as Black English as basilects.

My discussion of language also includes the following terms. *Pidgin* is a language that has no native speakers. A pidgin does away with problematic language features which speakers from a variety of languages might find difficult or hard to learn (Dillard, 1972). When a pidgin becomes the only language of a speech community, then it becomes a Creole. A *Creole* is a language that was first a pidgin at an earlier stage of its development but then became the capital language of a speech community. A *dialect* is the specific speech pattern of a group of speakers whose language is similar in a major way (Dillard, 1972). Finally, *diglossia* is the technical term for code-switching from one language or dialect to another for different purposes (Dillard, 1972). *Ebonics* is a term that combines the words "phonics" and "Ebony" and refers to Black English and is credited to Robert Williams ("Fight continues for study of Ebonics," 1997).

So what is a language? To me, a language is more than just a systematic means of communication containing regular and well-ordered rules. A language is much more than just a method of communication. Language converts thoughts and ideas to spoken and written expressions. Language is also a means of transmitting cultural values and mores. Through language, children acquire a sense of who they are as well as a sense of their speech community. Susan Philips (1989) states that ways of communicating are part of a larger cultural system. As a system of behavior, speaking is organized in culturally specific ways. Members of a speech community share more than just a similar linguistic code, they also share the boundaries of what constitutes cultural specific, socially appropriate speech.

Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater and Bonnie Sunstein (1997) describe culture as a slippery term. It is "an invisible web of behaviors, patterns, rules and rituals of a group of people who have contact with one another and share common languages" (p. 3). Applying Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein's definition, Black culture encompasses Black English.

But Black English is also a slippery term. In fact, what constitutes Black English, its borders and its status as a dialect versus a language is a raging debate in academic, political and social circles. While my personal definition of Black English applies to the language of the majority of African Americans who reside in Waterloo and are members of

Waterloo's Black community, I determine the boundaries of standard English as the language of the White, mainstream majority of Americans spoken by the majority White middle to upper income population in Waterloo, Iowa. I also take the stance that Black English is a language in its own right. What I view as Black English has been called many things. Table 1 illustrates the many references to Black English and standard English.

It is difficult to find agreement on any term or to actually define the perimeters of each term. Several noted researchers have attempted a definition.

Over two decades ago, in 1972, William Labov was interested in studying the language, culture and social peer-group structure in Black youth in large, urban centers in the United States. Labov uses the term Black English Vernacular, (BEV) a term sometimes used today, defining it as the "relatively uniform dialect spoken by a majority of Black youth in most parts of the United States today, especially in the inner city areas" (p. xiii). Labov prefers to use the term Black English as a generality to describe all language varieties spoken by African Americans in the United States.

Labov perceives BEV as separate and distinct from conventional English, especially in terms of tense. In his critique of BEV, Labov identifies four structural aspects that he feels are crucial pieces of information needed by

Table 1. Labels and Names for Standard and Black English

Black English (Baldwin, 1994; Wyatt, 1995; Cazden, 1996)

Negro non-standard dialect (Wyatt, 1995)
Black English Vernacular (Labov, 1972)
Black street speech (Baugh, 1983)
African American English (Foster, 1995)
Africanized English (Wyatt, 1995)
African American/Black slang (Major,1994)
ghetto talk (Paley, 1989)

street slang
broken English (Dillard, 1972)
bad English
poor English
patois (Jones, 1992)
Ebonics (Williams, 1997)
Pan-African Communication Behaviors
African Language Systems
(Oakland Resolution, 1996)

---

standard English (Christensen, 1994; Holland, 1997))

---

standard American English (Wyatt, 1995)
correct English
proper English (Jones, 1992)
White English (Jones 1992)
good English
decent English
power dialect (Delpit, 1995)
cash language (Christensen, 1994)

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teachers who teach Black English-speaking children. Those four structural areas are: (1) the tendency to simplify consonant clusters at the endings of words, (2) the weakening of final consonants into glottal stops or disappearing altogether, (3) the copula in Black English has the verb forms of /be/ not realized and finally, (4) the characteristic of many Black English speakers to sound words as potential homonyms. While Labov's work can be viewed as seminal in terms of the study of BEV, I apply an historical critique to his descriptors and definitions and point out that his very use of terms implies a judgmental attitude. In particular, Labov's use of the words simplify, weakening, and not realized implies judgment on Labov's part and suggests a deficit. Table 2 clarifies Labov's aspects of Black English Vernacular, providing brief examples of each structural aspect.

Table 2. Labov's Four Structural Aspects of Black English Vernacular

- the tendency to simplify consonant clusters at the end of words ending in -st, -ft, -nt, -ld and -nd so that words such as past and mind and cold sound like *pas', min' and co'd.*
- the weakening of final consonants into glottal stops or disappearing altogether such as the final [d] in dad, mad and pad sounding more like *dat, mat and pat.*
- the copula in Black English has the verb forms of [be] not realized in such sentences like *She gone* and *He sick*, as opposed to the standard English He is sick, or She is gone.
- many Black English speakers tend to sound words as potential homonyms, for instance *deaf* sounding like death or *oil* sounding like all.

Labov feels the understanding of such structural differences between standard English and Black English has strong implications for teaching the language arts to children. He recommends that teachers' awareness of such structural differences can not only facilitate language instruction, but would also allow teachers to anticipate and plan for possible difficulty and confusion for children who speak Black English. Labov perceives the real problem of language diversity to be the failure of both standard English-speaking teachers and Black English-speaking children to understand the systematic contradictions of one another's language. He refers to this phenomena as "reciprocal ignorance" and feels that teachers' and students' ignorance of each other's language system equates to an inability to translate between the two systems. Labov concludes that reading failure among Black youth is the result of political and cultural conflict in the classroom. According to Labov, the difference between standard and Black English is symbolic of this conflict.

As the opening scenario illustrates, early in my career as a teacher in the Waterloo public school system, I struggled to comprehend my students, and I frequently did not understand the use of words and different phrases. I also struggled with my impulse to "correct" the speech of my African American students. To illustrate, I frequently felt the urge to say bathroom when an African American student asked to use the *bafroom* or when I heard a student utter *fo'*, I wanted to say four/for.

Although I did not recognize it at the time, I possessed a very condescending attitude toward any language that happened to be different from my own, and I'm sure I relayed a sense of superiority toward many students. I certainly did this with Antonio. I simply did not understand his language or the language of many of my other African American students. I had not been adequately prepared by my initial teacher education program in secondary English to recognize and address language and linguistic diversity. I was never offered any sort of assistance from my district in terms of inservice or staff development that would aid me in understanding my students or meeting their need to be diglossic. If I had been aware of Labov's research identifying the differences between Black English and standard English, I truly believe I could have been a much more knowledgeable and effective teacher. I also believe that recognizing Black English as a separate language leads to acknowledgment and validation of Black culture.

Language Classification in American Society: The Outer Layer

Although writing at the same time as Labov, Dillard (1972) examines Black English from a different perspective.

Dillard's primary interest is in how Black English developed, tracing its origin to Africa. Dillard illustrates how today's Black English developed historically and in an orderly fashion from West African Pidgin English. He claims that at the time, Black English was very, very different and independent from other English dialects in America. Furthermore, he asserts that current Black English has a different syntactic structure and different semantics than the English spoken by the mainstream White culture. Dillard theorizes that Black English developed primarily from a Creole predecessor spoken nearly exclusively throughout the plantation South prior to emancipation.

He offers systematic, historical evidence that Englishmen did not simplify English in order to teach it to Africans who were enslaved, nor did today's Black English evolve from British English. Rather, Dillard illustrates how today's American Black English can be traced to West African Pidgin English (Dillard, 1972). Considering that West Africa is where America's slave population was taken and using historical documents such as journals, diaries, slave bills, advertisements and examples of Black dialect included in literature, Dillard brings to life the history and origins of Black English in America. Black English has retained its structural differences and is closely related to current day African languages such as Liberian Pidgin English, WesKos Pidgin found in the Cameroun and Sierra Leone Krio. Dillard

(1972) exposes the illogical theory of Black English being an England-to-America development. The following theory establishes an historical perspective on Black English.

A Language Is Born

The Portuguese figured very prominently in the African-to-New World slave trade. The early slave traders practiced language mixing in an attempt to control and more easily manage slaves (Dillard, 1972). This forced enslaved Africans to develop a type of *lingua franca*, or a language of wider communication. Enslaved Africans were kept in West African coastal slave factories until they were shipped to the New World, and many picked up Portuguese Pidgin in those factories. It was simply easier for many slaves to communicate in the Pidgin than to find an African language in common since slaves came from many different villages and groups. A great number of enslaved Africans did not have to give up their African languages right away. They did so out of the necessity to learn another language as quickly as possible. In order to be able to communicate in the mixture of speakers of many different languages, which marked the language conditions in the slave factories on the west coast of Africa and plantations in the American colonies, a new language was born. Dillard's theory parallels Kenneth Goodman's (1996) language development theory of invention-convention. Out of a need to communicate among themselves, enslaved Africans "invented" a language of common understanding against the conventions of the language of their slaveholders.

According to Dillard (1972), when speakers of many languages are mixed together without a predominant language, a pidgin develops. Such was the situation in the coastal slave factories in West Africa and on slave ships bound for America. A pidgin, invented out of necessity, was born. This particular pidgin contained many linguistic features common to African languages. For example the /th/ sound, which is absent or does not exist as a sound in most West African languages, was a linguistic feature of this developing pidgin.

The pidgin that was rapidly developing traveled with the slaves to the New World. Children were born on the passage to America or on American shores who learned the pidgin almost exclusively. Again, out of necessity, the pidgin became the language in common among New World slaves. Africans who spoke this pidgin or non-standard variety of English came to the New World without any stops in England. Pidgin Portuguese was heavily influenced by English and a new pidgin, Pidgin English, became the language of the slaves. "By 1715 there clearly was an African Pidgin English known on a worldwide scale" (Dillard, 1972, p. 78). This pidgin has evolved to current American Black English, retaining African linguistic features to this day.

Returning to the example of how a pidgin retains linguistic features, today many African Americans who speak Black English may sound an ending /th/ sound as an /f/ or /t/ sound. The absence of a /th/ sound is an African remnant, contained in the original pidgin and retained in Black English, evidence of how Black English began in Africa among enslaved African trying to communicate in a developing pidgin.

Even though the pidgin was widely used in slavetrading, many White Europeans looked down upon the pidgin, referring to it as "broken English." Perhaps this attitude was the beginning of how status in America today is often assigned according to the language variety spoken. Speech is often the marker of class distinction. This stratification is even more prominent in England.

As an educator, I have witnessed, first-hand, attitudes toward language with Black English being perceived as somehow inferior to mainstream White English. Black English, and those who speak it, have been slighted by the dominant, White-centered attitude toward language history. According to Dillard (1972) and Courtney Cazden (1996) Black English marks most African Americans today as being different from the mainstream America, both culturally and linguistically and therefore distinct from those of any large group of Whites.

An historical perspective on Black English establishes it as a distinct language. Its similarities to other varieties of English is unmistakable, yet the different system of syntax, brought to America by Africans who had been enslaved, and vastly different semantic and pragmatic associations are consequences that are rarely acknowledged and only beginning to be accepted and understood in the educational arena (Dillard, 1972). (See Appendix A for a brief illustration of how Black English differs structurally from standard varieties of English). This context of language classification forms the outer layer of the nesting design used in this study. The outer layer, attitude toward language difference, frames the classrooms central to this study (See Figures, Table of Contents).

John Lahr (1997) in a piece for The New Yorker writes about a New York City school speech program specially designed for artistic and talented Harlem youth. Lahr interviews a speech and language teacher within the program who was attempting to offer students from Harlem who spoke Black English an opportunity to study and learn standard English. The program is built on the premise that standard English is necessary to succeeding in American society.

The teacher featured in Lahr's piece found three features of Black English, which he describes as phonetic variants, to be especially problematic and perceived by the dominant culture as deficits.

As an educator, I recognize the transmission of the value of a language. Children use the grammatical system they have learned from the adults around them. "A child's speech community prescribes for him not only the grammatical forms of his language but also the times appropriate for the use of that language" (Dillard, 1972, p. 33). Varieties of language are maintained by the social pressures of the group(s) that speak the varieties. "Group identity is perhaps the strongest of such pressures" (Dillard, 1972, p. 114).

Table 3. Distinct, Unique Aspects of Black English Often Perceived by the Dominant Culture as Language Deficits

- Dipthongs sounded as pure vowels such as your becoming *yo'*.
- Consonant clusters becoming disappearing glottal stops or sounding different from standard pronunciations such as ask becoming *as* or hands sounding like *han's*.
- The [th] sound, which does not exist in West African languages, sounds as a [t] or an [f] such as in the following sentences: *They were seven munt' babies.* and *Today is my birfday.*

Many Black children in Waterloo speak Black English because it is the language of their home and community. It *is a language spoken almost exclusively by Blacks.* We *do not* expect a child to know that the school system undervalues his/her speech system, but that's exactly what happens to many Black English-speaking children (Labov, 1972; Dillard, 1972; Lahr, 1997). How can Waterloo's White teachers become aware that some of their Black English-speaking children misunderstand their standard English? How can the schools in Waterloo assist African American children in understanding that some White teachers misunderstand and misinterpret their Black English? How can the Waterloo school system help Black English speakers value both their language and the acquisition of standard English?

How Teachers' Knowledge of Language Affects Practice

American culture assigns low status to Black English speakers. Teachers, especially language arts, English and reading teachers, may lack basic information and understanding about their Black students' language. Labov (1972), Dillard (1972) and Cazden (1996) advocate that teachers of children who speak Black English must be knowledgeable about the language itself. Cazden (1996) believes that teachers' knowledge of their students' language can facilitate language instruction. Drawing upon her own experiences when she left the university for a year to return to an elementary classroom, Cazden describes how knowledge about language helps teachers impact students, and she offers three examples of how her personal knowledge about her students' language allowed her to assist and support them as they used: 1) invented spellings, 2) overgeneralized irregular plural forms and 3) used Black English in the classroom. Cazden's knowledge about language allows her to make informed decisions in the classroom. But Cazden is a sociolinguist. She is trained, educated and experienced about language and literacy, and she may very well possess bodies of knowledge about language that typical elementary classroom teachers do not possess. Cazden laments the "time lag between the development of a field, in this case sociolinguistics, and the application of its concepts and methodologies to a specific setting, the classroom" (1996, p. 95). In other words, research knowledge about language is available, but it is not being utilized by classroom teachers. What I perceive as my own lack of preparation in regard to language diversity bears out Cazden's claim.

According to Dillard, (1972), English majors come to know obscure facts about famous English poets and writers, and many, like me, study the fourteen dialects of English found in the United Kingdom, but English majors are not offered even the most rudimentary knowledge of Black English, a language that many of their potential students may speak. Dillard reminds readers that "Black children have a fully viable language system" (p. 270). My experiences teaching African American students in Waterloo has shaped my belief that elementary teachers should know and appreciate both the history and structure of Black English.

Attitude toward language diversity may lay at the crux of this argument. Establishing Black English as a separate language emerges as a starting point and dignifies Black culture as well.

Toya Wyatt (1995) studies the educational implications of teaching young African American English-speaking (AAE) children. She provides an overview of research on language development in AAE child speech, offers a synthesis of implications for educational professionals, and addresses methodological issues to consider when investigating the language of AAE-speaking children. While early dialect studies such as Labov's (1972) helped to change attitudes toward language diversity, Wyatt points out that studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s focus on adolescent and adult AAE speakers, not young speakers.

Wyatt (1995) contends that African American children from low socioeconomic backgrounds use features of AAE more readily than middle-income African American children as she describes several studies that illustrate speech-related class differences among AAE-speaking children. Such research does not address the fact that certain features of Black English are not present 100% of the time due to the highly complex social situations that produce speech. Simply put, in some research studies the use of AAE is highly dependent on context or situational factors. Wyatt also notes that AAE reflects a dialectal continuum, a "great range of variation among speakers [of Black English]" (1995, p. 16). Considering the range of language development that exists with any population of African American children, Wyatt reminds us that "African American children bring a heterogeneous blend of linguistic and cultural communication styles that must be taken into consideration when interpreting research studies" (1995, p.16). In respect to code-switching, Wyatt cautions that those who wish to conduct research studies among African American children should strive to "elicit language data within a variety of different settings with a variety of different partners" (1995, p. 17). In conclusion, Wyatt maintains that "It is important for child language researchers, educators and clinicians to become more knowledgeable about how and when AAE child speakers acquire grammatical and phonological features of their dialect" (1995, p. 19). She calls for further research investigations that seek to compare language produced by both AAE-speaking adults and children, and she advocates that educators "must remain current in their knowledge of African American child language development research" (1995, p. 20).

Dual Language Demands: The Need To Be Diglossic

Establishing Black English as a separate language may help some educators clarify the relationship between language and culture. Such clarification may also explain the concept of language as a cultural marker as well as the dual language demands required of Black English-speaking African American children in Waterloo, Iowa.

John Baugh (1983), professor of education, linguistics and anthropology, examines the history, structure and survival of what he terms Black street speech. Baugh's interest in language differences was triggered by his childhood fascination with his mother's ability to be diglossic. Baugh recalls being mesmerized by how his mother, depending on to whom she was speaking, would change her speech while talking on the telephone. As Baugh grew older, he could tell if his mother was speaking to a White person or to a Black person based on how she changed her speech.

Defining "Black street speech" as the nonstandard urban dialect of Black Americans, Baugh describes how his home language community made up of family and friends valued Black speech. However, he also shares how his parents insisted that he master standard English so he could negotiate successfully within American society at large. Due to the language conditions that existed around him, Baugh became diglossic because his very existence demanded two speech varieties.

Baugh presents the issue of Black English as an oppositional issue: Black English is essential to Black cultural identity and Black English is an obstacle to success. Baugh has expanded his focus from defining Black street speech as a social dialect to studying how language is a barrier to oppressed people throughout the world.

Delpit (1992) shares Baugh's perspective on Black English, understanding the dual language knowledge demands of many African American children. Delpit describes classrooms and schools as "culturally alien environments" to many African American children. She feels that teachers are in pivotal roles to help Black students who speak Black English learn the "literate discourse" of the middle class, that is, features such as style, grammar and mechanics that are valued in school and society. However, Delpit cautions, African Americans also need to use Black English in order to maintain cultural ties to their Black communities.

Delpit (1994) addresses the valuing of language and small children's abilities to differentiate between two languages when she shares the story of her initial teaching experiences in a first grade room in Philadelphia. As she follows the language arts teacher's edition verbatim, introducing a story about living in a city, an astute first grader recognizes language difference when he asks her, "Teacher, how come you talkin' like a white person? You talkin' just like my momma when she get on the phone!" What Delpit, much like Baugh, recognizes from this brief exchange is that children who are African American and whose home language is Black English are quite able to differentiate between school discourse and "culturally familiar interaction patterns" of Black English and to question usage in different contexts (p. 130). Living in two worlds demands such differentiation.

Delpit (1995) argues that African Americans who speak Black English should retain their own language, but that in order to be successful in American society, African Americans also need to master standard English. Delpit suggests that teachers, first and foremost, should recognize that the language students bring to school is intimately tied to their family, community and personal identity. A teacher who labels language as wrong also labels a child and his or her experience as wrong. Delpit calls on educators to help linguistically diverse students acquire an additional form of language, standard English, while at the same time, validating whatever language the child brings to school without using that language to limit the child's potential. Delpit also feels that teachers must recognize and acknowledge that there can be conflict and tension between home discourse and academic discourses and that our society engages in the unfair practice of "discourse stacking" (1995).

Like Baugh and Delpit, educator Ron Emmons, (1997) argues that as an African American, he must be diglossic. Emmons maintains that he has to understand and use Black English in order to be heard in both his family and community. He claims his experiences on the high school basketball court of his native Chicago and spending time with his Mississippi-born grandparents demanded that he speak Black English.

What determined if he spoke either Black English or standard English? Context. Emmons believes that standard English is the path to acceptance in school, the workplace, the university and in mainstream American society, however no one should be made to feel ashamed of his or her home language.

Noted writer James Baldwin (1994) offers yet another perspective on Black English. He believes that language reveals the speaker, and that language is a political instrument. Those who were born into the mainstream speak the language of the dominant group, language that is highly regarded in academic settings and in society in general. He contends that African Americans have been, and continue to be, penalized for having created Black English. Baldwin declares that whether or not Black English is a language or dialect is not the issue, but the issue is really the role of language within society.

> It is not the Black child's language that is despised. It is his experience. A child cannot be taught by anyone who despises him, and a child cannot afford to be fooled. A child cannot be taught by anyone whose demand, essentially, is that the child repudiate his experience, and all that gives him sustenance, and enter a limbo in which he will no longer be Black, and in which he knows he can never become white (Baldwin, 1994, p. 617).

Jean Anyon (1995) addresses how the culture of African American students collides with the culture of schools. Anyon states that it is hard to learn to read and write in a language you do not speak, and compounding the issue is the fact that texts and tests are often different from the Black English spoken by many African American children. The subtlety of difference and the lack of familiarity with standard English terms confuses a great number of African American children whose home language is considered Black English. Anyon argues that the tests and texts used in schools, whose syntax and phonetic structure differ from Black English, impart a White, middle class curriculum written in a language that not only differs from the language of the student, but may also interfere with the student's abilities to comprehend that language. Such mismatches deserve careful consideration.

Drawing upon my own teacher training and preparation and my teaching background in Waterloo, I believe that teachers need to know as much as possible about their students, especially if language and culture differ from their own. I further believe that in Waterloo, acknowledging, validating and valuing Black English as a separate language system with a discernible structure may be the most logical starting place in the educational debate between Black English and standard English. In Waterloo in particular, where only 6.31% of the teaching force is African American, there exists a need to systematically inform teachers about the structure, semantics and contextual usage of Black English and to deal with the negative attitudes that exist toward Black English. The Waterloo Community Schools need to explore ways to assist teachers who lack knowledge about Black English to become knowledgeable about Black English. According to Cazden (1996), teachers need to focus on the structure within the context of social purpose. I believe that the Waterloo district should develop a pedagogy that meets the language and culture needs of African American children who speak Black English.

Stratification within Black English

The perimeters of a language are often marked by the dialects and regional differences. Such variations exist in Black English, stratifying it like many other languages.

However, there is not universal agreement about what exactly constitutes Black English, and it is erroneous to assume that all African Americans speak the same language or have the same experiences and attitudes toward language. Toya Wyatt (1995) states "there is a considerable range of language diversity within the African American speech community" (p. 15).

There is no agreement on how to define Black English, its boundaries and who speaks it as a home language. Of course, skin color does not determine language. White children in the right context, my son Adam included, will speak Black English. Darwin Turner, a Black man, hailed from a Black family that spoke standard English. In essence, not every African American speaks Black English or a singular form of Black English.

Clarence Major (1994) recognizes and validates this stratification. In the dictionary of African American slang entitled *Juba to Jive*, he classifies Black English according to geographical region such as Northern City Use, Northern Rural Use, Southern City Use, Southern Rural Use and West Coast Use. In addition, Major also provides Black English etymology or word origins with categories such as jazz culture to further define the entries in his comprehensive dictionary.

A prime example is the experiences of Rachel Jones. Jones (1992) who is Black, does not speak Black English. The situation creates tensions for her and makes her suspect to many Black English-speaking African Americans.

As a child, Jones was ridiculed by her peers for speaking standard English. As a result of her speech her friends would accuse her of "sounding white," an insult at the very least. All her life, Jones has encountered the situation of "talking proper" which equated to speaking conventional English which, in turn, was equated to having white skin. "Because of the way I talk, some of my Black peers look at me sideways and ask, Why do you talk like you're White?" (Jones, 1992, p. 17). To me the pontificating Jones endures from her African American friends as a result of her language illustrates the notion that African Americans who do not speak Black English are often suspect or ridiculed, considered "oreos" and accused of "actin' white." Such individuals are perceived as not "acting Black" due to their use of standard English.

To counteract such a view, Jones points to such notable African Americans as Mercer X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Toni Morrison and Alice Walker as having mastered standard English. Jones further argues that these individuals' knowledge of standard English neither diminishes their Blackness nor their commitment to Black culture. However, Jones's experiences with language and cultural identity also highlight the tension that language diversity raises in America.

Ebonics: The Most Recent Debate over Black English

On December 18, 1996, The Oakland, California, Board of Education, upon recommendation from the district's African American Task Force, passed a resolution that sent shock waves through educational, political and social circles across America (see Appendix B). Concerned with the success rate of African American students, the task force considered the following statistics: Of the 51,000 students enrolled in Oakland schools, 53% are African American; 64% of students recommended for retention each year are African American; 71% of students placed in special education classes are African American; Approximately 20% of African American seniors do not graduate; Nearly 80% of all suspensions were African American. In Oakland,African American students make up nearly three quarters of the students in remedial English classes (Puente, 1996). "While white and Asian students have B averages in the district, blacks average a D-plus grade" (Holland, 1997, p. A1). Oakland's statistics paint a bleak and dismal picture of the success rate for over half of Oakland's student population ("Language of Politics," 1997). The African American Task Force of the Oakland School District upon drafting the resolution, concludes that "the key to achievement is how well we [students] master the language of commerce or standard English" (Holland, 1997, p. A1).

The resolution delcares that 1) Ebonics or Black English is a primary language, not a dialect, and 2) teachers need to emphasize the value of the primary language, using contrastive analysis with Standard English to help African American students who speak Black English as their primary language come to understand and master standard English. By passing the resolution, Oakland School Board members acknowledge several realities: many African American students in Oakland do not speak standard English, a disproportionate number of African American students enrolled in the Oakland schools are not learning to read, write and speak standard English by current methods, and finally, a teacher's knowledge and understanding of "Ebonics" may help educators better teach Black children (Puente, 1996).

The Oakland Board's acceptance of the resolution to elevate Black English to a language and to require that Oakland teachers both respect and understand the language of over half of their students generated a hot debate nationwide. I perceive the intent of the resolution as advocating the need to teach good language skills to all children and to address the sociocultural barriers that often prevent African American children from learning the standard English essential to success in school and society.

Additionally, the Oakland School Board took a giant step in publicly acknowledging, accepting and dignifying Black English as a language onto itself.

In the days and weeks following the approval of the resolution, outraged headlines appeared in newspapers and news publications across the country. The following survey of newspaper headlines focusing on the Ebonics debate illustrates the depth and breath of the Ebonics debate and exemplifies the range of opinions that exist regarding Black English. Although some headlines promote a negative view toward Ebonics, other headlines illustrate a positive view toward Black English (see Table 4).

These sample headlines help establish the boundaries of the Ebonics debate. What a progressive and informed Board of Education decided in Oakland, California has clear implications for the Board of Education in Waterloo, Iowa.

Language Is Power

Standard English is the language of power (Delpit, (1995). "Language is power and that power grows when one knows the dominant language well" (De Mola, 1992, p. 211). Politician, Jesse Jackson, uses the term "cash language" to recognize standard English as the language of power and wealth in America (Christensen, 1994).

Herein lies the tension of the issue: In order to maintain status in the Black community in Waterloo, Black

Table 4. Sample of Headlines Covering Ebonics

- The Des Moines Register, December 21, 1996 carries a column by Thomas Sowell that sports the headline "Racial Hoax in Oakland, Studying Black English Won't Help Students."
- From the February 2, 1997 edition of the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier comes the headline, "Famous African Americans have some Bones to Pick about Ebonics."
- In a guest opinion piece in the Viewpoint column of an early March edition of The New York Times T.J. Rodgers proclaims, "Ebonics: Empty Theories and Empty Promises."
- The title of A Letter to the Editor from January 26, 1997, Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier proclaims, "Ebonics is absurd, racist."
- In the March, 1997, issue of Foundry Management and Technology magazine's editor, Dean M. Peters calls his opinion piece, "Ebonic Plague."
- "Ebonics Masks True Problems of Poverty," is the headline from an article from the January 10, 1997, Atlanta Constitution.
- Donald Kaul's piece in The Des Moines Register on January 8, 1997, "What do people have against Ebonics?" questions the backlash against the Oakland, California, school district's decision to help White teachers learn structural elements of Black English.
- In the January 10, 1997 edition of the Bradenton (Florida) Herald, Kaul's column reads "What's harm in Oakland board trying new tack to teach poor kids?"

English must be used, however, the Waterloo schools and mainstream society demand the use of standard English. It is very difficult to get someone who speaks in one language to read and write in another, yet that is exactly what is demanded from many African American children in Waterloo. A huge mismatch in instruction can and often does occur if

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educators lack the knowledge, understanding and acceptance of their students' culture, especially if it differs from their own. The resulting tension for many African American children is that they are forced to be bicultural and bilingual; understanding the nuances and rules of their own culture and language as well as mainstream White culture. What then, should be the expectations for White teachers who teach African American children in Waterloo, Iowa?

Before explaining the details of this study, however, the rest of this chapter will present different views on Black English, language diversity and cultural conflict in the classroom. Understanding the language of the teachers and children in these classrooms is dependent on understanding the sociocultural context in which language is embedded in the United States. American society at large can be viewed as the initial layer of the nest, important to understanding how this study was designed.

Different Views on Black English

John Ogbu (1986; 1988), a noted anthropologist, along with Hale-Benson (1986), Delpit (1992; 1995), Major (1994), and Baldwin (1994), view Black English as a distinct language and cultural identity marker symbolizing the very essence of Black American culture.

In contrast, Turner, (1996) an African Studies educator, cautions that even the attempt to label, classify or tightly define the language of a majority of African Americans as

Black English is erroneous and detrimental. According to Turner, generalizing that all African Americans tend to speak that same pattern or kind of language stereotypes African Americans. To illustrate the existing spectrum of language varieties spoken by African Americans, Turner points to his own family language, learned from his mother and two adult caregivers, identifying it as standard English. Yet, he claims, his mother, "a college graduate, was black inside as well as outside [and] although they were rural and southern-born, they did not speak 'black' English" (p.258).

As Turner (1996) asserts, sweeping generalizations of any kind about behavior or language patterns are stereotyping. My stance in this language study centers on the notion that the majority of African Americans who belong to the Black community in Waterloo, Iowa, speak a distinct, definable language which I label Black English. My stance is a personal view, shared by some and rejected by others, that is derived from personal inquiry and study and my fourteen years of professional experiences teaching African American children in Waterloo schools. Relying on Ogbu (1986; 1988), Hale-Benson (1986), Delpit (1992; 1995), Major (1994), and Baldwin (1994) for support, I assert that for a great many African Americans in Waterloo, Iowa, speaking Black English is not only a symbol of social identity, but also a sign of group membership in Waterloo's Black community.

Language and culture are hard to separate and in many instances, language is a cultural marker. Ogbu, an African researcher who focuses his research on African Americans, theorizes that in America, caste-like minorities are stratified into racial and caste-like social stratification categories. In particular, Ogbu has examined the caste-like stratification of Black Americans within American society (1986; 1988).

According to Ogbu, non-Western immigrants, over time and through contact with Americans, acquire and display Western-type cognitive competence by going to school. Most caste-like minorities resist acquiring and displaying dominant American cultural behaviors. "Caste-like minorities are those who incorporated into the country, more or less involuntarily" (Ogbu, 1986, p. 27). Black Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans and Hawaiians all fit this category. The White, dominant group treats caste-like minorities as inferior; However, Blacks and other caste-like minorities do not always accept this view of themselves. Ogbu observes that African American children who speak Black English may resist the standard English promoted in schools as they wish not to identify with the dominant, White, mainstream group.

Furthermore, I maintain that speaking Black English is expected and totally appropriate in many Black community social and cultural settings in Waterloo, Iowa, such as in the home, at play in neighborhoods, or in Black community churches. However, in the academic setting of Waterloo public schools and within the political arena of American society at large, African American children from Waterloo's Black community who speak Black English are also expected to master what is commonly referred to as standard English, the English associated with the White, middle income, mainstream.

In American society, standard English enjoys prestige. Dillard (1972) writes, "A standard language (or dialect) is one that has received official recognition in terms of having written grammatical descriptions [that] prescribe 'correct' usage" (p.303). Succeeding in American society hinges on the ability to speak and write standard English, a belief shared by Baugh, (1983) Delpit (1992, 1995) and Christensen (1994).

In short, African American children, whether in Waterloo, Iowa, or elsewhere in the United States, whose home language is Black English need to be "diglossic." The linguistic term "diglossia means the use of different languages (or dialects) for different purposes" (Dillard, 1972, p. 301). Francois Grosjean (1982) states that diglossia is natural when an individual's interactions with the world around them demands that two languages be used. Grosjean further describes code-switching as the ability to interact in two or more languages or use two or more linguistic varieties during conversation. Code-switching then, refers to the ability to move between variant forms of a language. This ability to shift from one language to another is a very typical development in the language mixing process learners experience as they use and learn two languages. According to Philips (1983) and Shirley Brice Heath (1983), for some children, code-switching is sorting out who speaks what, when. Such is the case of African American children who belong to Black English-speaking communities like Waterloo's. Such children need to be able to "read" social, academic and political situations, "code switching" their language from Black English to standard English as situations and audiences warrant.

Language Learning in Schools

Traditional elementary school reading, writing and language arts programs almost exclusively emphasize the mechanics, usage and grammar of standard English. Little, if any attention is given to addressing the presence of any variant or dialect of English, such as Black English, recognizing it as different from the language of school, or facilitating code switching. To compound the problem, teacher education programs do little to expose preservice teachers to either an appreciation of language diversity including Black English or an understanding of the structure, semantics and usage of Black English.

Schools do little to validate Black English and to promote code switching among Black English-speaking children.

Jill Bartoli (1986) argues a critical point when she states that less-than-equal educational opportunities are offered to American students whose home culture and language fall outside of the White, middle-class mainstream majority. For Bartoli, schools and the entire American educational process represent powerful social dynamics at work. They perpetuate the social class systems of the United States, favoring one culture, its behavior, mores and language over other subcultures. In particular, Bartoli perceives special education as a sorting and labeling process set up to maintain the dominant mainstream culture. She supports her claim by referring to the well-documented overrepresentation of lower socioeconomic (SES) children and children of ethnic minorities enrolled in special education programs.

Bartoli also claims that mainstream cultural values are tied to language competence as it is played out in language arts classes in schools. She states that the real problem of "English for Everyone" is actually a "poorly defined problem of incompetence in language arts" (Bartoli, 1986, p. 15). Schools, in their acceptance and perpetuation of mainstream culture, are actually biased against those outside. The traditional use of standardized tests and a fragmented, subskill-oriented curriculum also help to perpetuate the values of the cultural majority.

Traditional elementary school reading and language arts curricula generally consist of a basal reader with an arbitrarily chosen sequence and hierarchy of reading skills, an accompanying student workbook, plus ditto masters and duplicating masters for practicing discreet skills, a district-mandated spelling list and perhaps a commercial publisher's grammar book.

Instead of a child-centered classroom where choices are negotiated and instruction is designed to meet students' specific language needs, many elementary teachers are like the technician so often described by Canadian researcher, Frank Smith (1986). Such teachers use packaged language programs complete with predetermined goals and objectives which may or may not address the particular language needs of their students, and teachers rely on those packaged reading and language arts program for skill instruction worksheets, a deluge of seatwork and pre- and post multiple choice tests for assessment and evaluation. Such an educator is a technician in a rigid delivery system which focuses on the drill of isolated subskills (Goodman, 1979).

A traditional, fragmented, skills-based curriculum dispossesses children of the ability to practice life skills and higher order thinking skills, and robs children of the meaning-making function of language. The use of standardized tests further fragments and trivializes the curriculum. Such tests sort and label children and reduce educators to technicians leading to feelings of isolation and alienation, resulting in undemocratic American education that favors the majority culture (Bartoli, 1995). For example, Black children are discernibly absent from top academic tracks as they are absent from middle class society. When education favors one culture over another, a relationship of distrust between Black communities and schools is fostered.

The need for African American children to speak different languages in different situations creates tensions. African American children who speak Black English often reject the standard English promoted in schools, resisting identification with the dominant White group. In fact, many Black English-speaking, African American children may favor their home language, Black English, to avoid being labeled an "oreo," or an "Uncle Tom," or to avoid taunting and teasing about "talkin' proper" or "acting white" from their peer groups, family members and Black community members. Thus, Bartoli (1995) advocates for a change in language instruction that will address the sociopolitical aspects of language and culture.

Language Diversity and Cultural Conflict

Hale-Benson refers to the "mismatch between school culture and the social, cultural and experiential background of minority children" as the primary cause of failure among Black school children in the United States (1986, p. 103). She further states that the expressive styles of Black children may be the "cause of tension between many teachers and Black students in educational settings" (p. 103).

Culture also influences how children approach and deal with academic tasks. Culture and language determine how one learns. If the cultural orientation of Black homes and communities is different from the school culture, then educators, especially White educators, need to understand Black culture (Hale-Benson, 1986).

Hale-Benson (1986) describes the feelings children experience when the language they are expected to master at school brings them into conflict with their home language environment as "bicultural ambivalence." Ogbu (1986) labels this same tension, "cultural inversion," which he defines as the tendency to perceive a behavior which does not reflect one's own culture as inappropriate or undesirable. In this case, the use of language is seen as being not Black because it emulates the language behavior of the dominant White group. Similarly, Delpit (1992) describes the acquisition of "literate discourse" or the language of schools, as "bowing before the master" (p. 296). Despite this tension, elementary students need to succeed in academic "talk" and in academic situations. In her book aptly titled, *Other Peoples' Children* Delpit (1995) focuses on the tension of White teachers who are faced with student populations with whom they are completely unfamiliar. She stresses that by 2000, close to 40% of all school-aged children will be children of color; however, the majority of these children's teachers will be White. She perceives this as problematic unless college and university teacher education programs and school districts begin to educate teachers to acknowledge, accommodate and appreciate ethnic and cultural diversity.

Children who do not speak standard English as their first language need to learn to move successfully between the world of their home culture and community and the world of the mainstream culture (Freeman & Freeman, 1994). In regard to African American children from Waterloo, Iowa, whose home language is Black English, access to both the world of their home and community and the world of the mainstream, must be ensured.

Peter deVilliers, Mavis Donahue and Michael Walsh Dickey (personal communication, January 10, 1997) maintain that language prejudice against Black English is alive and well, and that teachers and other school officials may stigmatize African American children who speak Black English because of their own ignorance toward dialect and language differences.

An expectation that standard English should and will be mastered exists in our American society. At the heart of this expectation is the issue of attitudes toward language and language groups. In many cultural situations where one language is used by one group and another language by a second group, one language usually emerges as more prestigious (Freeman & Freeman, 1994). The language of those who are poorer or occupy lower economic levels usually emerges as less prestigious and less powerful than the language of the mainstream. In mainstream America, standard English enjoys favor; Black English does not. Christensen (1994) writes that our society "language classifies" its members. "Language, like tracking, functions as a part of a gate-keeping system in our country" (p. 145). Language is often perceived as an indication of intelligence, prestige and power in American society. Those who are not competent in standard English assume a position of less power in American society. Hale-Benson takes the issue a step further when she states that, "Competence in the majority language is a reflection of socialization of the individual and serves a gate-keeping function in access to higher education" (1986, p. 192).

To further compound the issue, White teachers are often faced with the challenge of teaching student populations with whom they are culturally different. Language differences only serve to exacerbate these cultural differences. Emilie Siddle-Walker (1992) states that "many African American students are misunderstood by the teachers who are attempting to teach them the literacy skills they need in order to function successfully in adult life" (p. 321). Language and cultural differences or "mismatches" between teachers and cultural style may be the root cause of such misunderstandings.

Literacy learning for students is a process shaped by issues of race, class, gender and culture. Research studies are needed to explore the tensions between language, culture and context for Black English-speaking African American children residing in midwestern cities such as Waterloo, Iowa. How teachers validate language difference and how code-switching is used and facilitated in elementary classrooms merits serious study. My experiences in education and my own inquiry as a teacher and learner have led me to believe that research on the issue of language and cultural difference is very much needed in the Waterloo, Iowa, public school system.

Organization

Chapter II explains the Vygotskian and whole language theoretical framework of this study and the need to establish a critical pedagogy in recognition of the existence of language diversity in America. Chapter III examines the next layer of the ethnographic nesting design of my study, Waterloo, Iowa's, African American community. Its origins and unique history are detailed through the eyes of a key informant, Mr. Jackie Parker. Chapter IV explains the methods of ethnographic research: participant observation, audiotaped recordings, subsequent transcription and selected interviewing, as well as the nesting design, setting and participants. In chapter V, I render a view of the Waterloo Community School district and Carver Elementary School in Waterloo, Iowa, through a description of classroom practice and through the language provided by children who comprised four case studies. One focal child in particular contributes intriguing insights into the issues of langugage diversity, culture and pedagogy. In chapter VI the voices of the informants are shared, presenting a rich perspective on language and culture. In the final chapter, chapter VII, I present and discuss the results of my analysis, conclusions and implications for the study.

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND PEDAGOGY

> "We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we **do** language. That may be the measure of our lives."
>
> -Toni Morrison
> Address on receipt of the 1993 Nobel prize for Literature
>
> (1997) *Rethinking Schools*

Establishing Black English as a separate language implies an attitudinal stance of acknowledgment and acceptance of Black culture as distinct. Acquiring a second language places dual demands on many African American children in Waterloo, Iowa, and elsewhere in America. These dual language demands create tensions, especially cultural conflict in the classroom. The following theoretical framework grounds this study and explains the language learning issues faced by educators who teach African American children. Critical pedagogy is presented as a solution that may help bridge this cultural gap.

Theoretical Framework

This research study is grounded in the approach to thought and language and social learning theories advocated by Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1962, 1986), and in the personal and social theory of language learning affirmed by Ken Goodman (1986, 1992) and Yetta Goodman (1990). The notion of critical pedagogy also grounds this study.

Personal and Social Views of Language

Vygotsky (1962, 1986) views language development as internalized social experience. Since his work has been translated into English, it has experienced a revival of sorts becoming increasingly valued in educational circles. Vygotsky's work explains several key constructs in the educational arena, particularly with regard to the social nature of language. Vygotsky's work has greatly informed how I consider language.

Vygotsky perceives the psychological development of language and thought as a dynamic process within the child, shaped by the social interaction provided by adults and significant others. According to Vygotsky, inner speech and personal language use are internalized from social language activity. This process of social language learning guides and directs an individual's language development. Language, then, is a vehicle for questioning, comprehending, informing, ritualizing and the other functions of language. The Vygotskian concept of education emphasizes the social context of thinking and lends important theoretical significance to the study of language and education.

Vygotsky states that "speech structures mastered by the child become the basic structures of his thinking" (1986, p. 94). If children revert to their original language for thought as Vygotsky maintains, what educational implications are there for African American children who speak Black English as their original language.

Vygotsky describes what a child can do unassisted, and what a child can do guided by the logic of an adult or others such as siblings, a more capable peer or even a text as a guiding force, as the "zone of proximal development." Social transactions are central to the construct of a zone of proximal development (Moll, 1990).

Children construct knowledge about language in response to how the adults and more mature members of the child's speech community use language. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development then, "is a key theoretical construct capturing as it does the individual within the concrete social situation of learning and development" (Moll, 1990, p. 4).

Vygotsky's emphasis on social interaction includes the notion of "mediation." Adults, especially teachers, siblings, other children and even texts, serve as mediators as children construct knowledge about and develop competence in their home language. In the case of spoken language, adult caregivers and older siblings in a speech community demonstrate language while children construct both language and knowledge about language. Responses are opportunities for further mediation (Vygotsky, 1962; 1986). This concept of language development can also be perceived as a theory of literacy education (Moll, 1990).

Viewing language in the context of its social use has clear implications for African American children from Waterloo, Iowa, who speak Black English. Such children acquire their language from their respective speech communities by receiving language demonstrations and mediation from adults, siblings, peers and other members of the specific language community into which they were born. Thus, the language of thought for those children is not the standard English language of schools, books, academia and American society at large. For many African American children in Waterloo, teachers are important supports in their zones of proximal development as teachers can help mediate standard English acquisition and proficiency.

Goodman (1986; 1992; 1996) advocates a socio-psycholinguistic theory of language learning as one of the pillars of a philosophy commonly known as whole language theory. Whole language is a set of beliefs, a perspective on language learning. Goodman's view states that language must be whole and functional in order to be comprehended and learned. Whole language theory views reading, writing, listening and speaking as inseparable components of language instruction. The principles of whole language (i.e. ownership, risk-taking, responsibility and purpose), require teachers to mediate learning by empowering and liberating learners (Goodman, 1986).

According to Goodman (1996), language is the medium of communication and thought, and knowledge is constructed by individual learners within the social context of interactions. Like Vygotsky, Goodman (1986) describes language learning as dynamic social transaction. An individual's power and ability to create language is shaped by the individual's social need to comprehend others as well as to be understood by others within the individual's speech community. "Language begins as a means of communication between members of the group. Through it, however, each developing child acquires a life view, constructing the cultural perspective, the ways of meaning, particular to its own culture" (p. 11). Learners build on social experience, expand on existing personal schemas and rely heavily on language for development. Whole language "assumes a single learning process influenced and constrained by personal understandings and social impacts" (Goodman & Goodman, 1990, p. 229). Vygotsky believes that language develops in the context of its use, a view that "is the essence of whole language" (Goodman & Goodman, 1990, p. 223).

Whole language, however, builds on Vygotskian social learning theories. Vygotsky's theories "bring personal and social knowledge together" (Goodman, 1992, p.358). While Vygotsky views language learning as internalization, Goodman says that as social forces exert conventional force on language learning, individuals also invent language. Goodman describes learning as "a series of complex transactions between the learner and the world" (1992, p. 358). He views teachers as powerful and influential mediators who assist children as they experience the forces of inventing language within the conventions of the social language.

> Whole language is whole. It does not exclude some languages, some dialects, or some registers because their speakers lack status in a particular society. Every language form constitutes a precious linguistic resource for its users. This does not mean that whole language teachers are not aware of the social values assigned to different language varieties and how these affect people who use them. But they can put these social values in proper perspective (Goodman, 1986, p. 27).

Teachers need to capitalize on the knowledge about language that children bring to school, respecting both the forms and use of that language (Whitmore & Goodman, 1996). The job of teachers then, is also to help students learn to use reading, writing, speaking and listening to fulfill a variety and range of personal language needs in a magnitude of social settings. "The teacher invites participation of the learners and supports their transactions with language and the world" (Goodman & Goodman, 1990, p. 225).

Critical Pedagogy

Some educational theorists and researchers such as Peter McLaren (1994), James Banks (1991), Janice Hale-Benson (1986) and Paulo Freire (1982) believe that a critical pedagogy that facilitates the achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, gender and social-class groups is requisite for success in American society. Critical pedagogy deals with power and empowerment issues in school settings reflective of the same issues in society at large. McLaren's, Banks's, Hale-Benson's and Freire's critiques of current educational pedagogy suggest that a critical pedagogy is needed for African American children who speak Black English.

McLaren (1994) believes that schools operate "hidden curriculums" that work against the success of racial minorities, females and those living in poverty. He further asserts that a critical pedagogy is crucial as mainstream pedagogy ignores or conceals the link between what teachers do in the classroom and how those efforts help build a better society. McLaren argues that current pedagogy results in "poor and minority youth who are already receiving substandard schooling [and] are likely to be left entirely outside of the job market" (1994, p. 11). The connections between language, schooling and success are obvious. "Nearly every large city school system has predominant minority enrollments and large numbers of students whose first language is not English" (1994, p. 13). Despite the fact that the demographics of American elementary-aged school children have changed over the last twenty years, and continue to change, the educational pedagogy of American education has remained virtually unchanged. A growing level of diversity is redefining and reinventing, on a yearly, monthly and yes, even daily basis, American classrooms and school systems.

Banks (1991) recommends a critical pedagogy that advocates a political stance toward diverse racial, ethnic and cultural groups to assist students from these groups to experience and enjoy academic success in schools. Banks' model of multicultural education includes four dimensions: content integration, knowledge construction, an equity pedagogy and an empowering school culture. Content integration deals with teachers using examples and content from a spectrum of cultures in their teaching. Knowledge construction involves teachers assisting students in understanding, investigating and determining how cultural perspective and frames of reference shape the ways in which knowledge is constructed. An equity pedagogy can and does exist when teachers modify their teaching so as to facilitate academic achievement of students from diverse backgrounds. Educational practices such as grouping, labeling, disproportionality in achievement and interactions between staff and students must be closely examined to create a school culture that offers empowerment to all. Banks's concept of an equity pedagogy, as applied to the area of language and literacy learning, would offer such empowerment.

According to Hale-Benson (1986) African American children are full participants in a culture not reflected and often not validated in schools. Furthermore, such a cultural orientation does not provide the majority of Black children with bodies of knowledge and information, including a language system and literacies, that are recognized, validated or used in schools. In fact, school culture, including the content and discourse of schools, is designed to reflect values that may be alien to many African American children. Hale-Benson (1986) reports that today's American public education system has been unsuccessful in meeting the educational needs of African American students by neglecting to recognize and validate the unique cultural contributions of Black children. She refers to the "mismatch between school culture and the social, cultural and experiential background of minority children" (p. 103) as the primary cause of failure among Black school children in the United States. "The masses of Black children [in America] depend upon a strong public school system for their education" (p. xi); therefore, schools should make every attempt to meet the needs of African American children.

Not only do African Americans participate in a distinct culture, but echoing Dillard (1972) and Labov, (1972) Hale-Benson emphasizes the distinctive and representative characteristics of African heritage, which she terms "African survivals" (p. 120) that have been retained by African Americans. "Certain characteristics peculiar to [American] Black culture have their roots in West Africa and have implications for the way Black children learn and think"

(Hale-Benson, 1986, p. 111). The distinctive nature of African American culture results in children who, from infancy, master cultural characteristics that differ from the mainstream. This especially includes the cultural expression of language, Black English.

Culture

Culture also influences how children approach and deal with academic tasks. Culture and language determine how one learns. Hale-Benson argues that cross-cultural research that draws upon the anthropological tools of observation and interview are badly needed. She laments the fact that Black teachers and researchers have not systematically investigated how culture shapes expressive styles, play behavior and language. If the cultural orientation of Black homes and communities is different from the school culture, then educators, especially White educators, need to understand Black culture. "Black children may be experiencing severe learning disabilities because of the differences between the culture in which they develop and learn and the culture they encounter in most public schools" (Hale-Benson, 1986, p. 102). The key to understanding African American children, according to Hale-Benson, is to understand the child in the context of his or her culture. Cultural patterns shape how information is seen, how it is organized and how it is ultimately used.

Black children are provided unique cultural experiences, and this cultural upbringing needs to be extended and integrated into the school culture. In particular, certain cultural expressions are evidence that Black children enter the school culture with a different background experience that is often at odds with the mainstream culture maintained within the school culture. (See Appendix C for a list of cultural expressions that may not be recognized and validated within the school setting).

Hale-Benson advocates an urgent need to develop and implement a distinct pedagogy for African American children reflective of the cultural experience of Black America. She calls for a new pedagogy that includes the notion that schools and the educational system in general should both recognize the unique cultural orientation of African American children as well as assist African American children in being able to competently use the tools of mainstream society including the language of the mainstream.

Like McLaren, (1994) Banks (1991) and Hale-Benson (1986), Freire believes that America's commitment to equal opportunities must include educational policies that extend opportunity to all. Freire (1982), a Brazilian educational reformer, views pedagogy as a form of liberation. Such a pedagogy which he terms a "pedagogy of the oppressed" calls for equity of opportunity. Freire claims that literacy can and does lead to empowerment.

Freire's view of literacy includes critical consideration of societal roles, interweaving literacy learning with the fight for social justice. His approach to learning urges participants to reflect with one another, drawing deeply on personal and collective experience to examine and understand how society functions. Thus, teachers act as partners in learning, validating, respecting and considering the knowledge that each participant (student) brings to the learning table. Freire dedicated his life to helping people to transform their own lives, challenging the systems and practices that oppress and maintain ignorance. He argues for a pedagogy that draws on students' life experiences, including language experiences to engage them in asking crucial questions about the functioning of society at large and their position within that society.

Whole Language also fits the critical pedagogy frame. For many teachers, whole language encompasses an educational reform movement that seeks to restructure curriculum as well as to create a new view of political and philosophical stances toward literacy education in American schools. Whole language advocates call for teachers to accept the language of the child, including the bilingual child and the child who speaks a dialect or variety of language different from the teacher's or the school's. According to whole language's philosophical stance, teachers, schools in particular, and American society need to accept the perspective that it is the school's job to expand upon whatever language learners bring to school. At the same time, schools should help all children acquire the necessary literacies and language skills needed to maneuver successfully in American society.

Interactional Teaching Style as a Form of Mediation

Infusing cultural continuity in the classroom can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Many African American children in Waterloo, Iowa, use speech for sophisticated social reasons. Two such reasons include: the notion of talk as social organization among Black children (Goodwin, 1990) and a distinct performance-oriented interactional style of speaking (Piestrup, 1973; Foster, 1989). Teachers' interactional style, how they manage face-to-face interaction and the use of language patterns and usage familiar to students, has been the focus of several research studies. To some degree performance, stylized communication and expressive behavior of language, exist in all speech communities. But how can such knowledge of language help teachers to help students?

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

The intent of A. M. Piestrup's (1973) study was to document teaching styles. The study was an examination of teaching style in fourteen predominantly African American first-grade classrooms in Oakland, California. Piestrup spent considerable time in classrooms observing interactions between teachers and children and identifies six distinct teaching styles. One style, labeled Black Artful, is a combination of repetition, alliteration, call & response, and the use of rhythm, variation, pace and creative language play. Such stylistic features of the Black Artful instructional style emulate the performance aspect of Black English and provide familiar speech events for African American children who feel comfortable with such features in the classroom and school setting.

In the same vein but in a different setting, Kathryn Au (1980) focuses on Hawaiian children, incorporating "Hawaiian Talk Story" into reading lessons. In Hawaiian Talk Story, children have opportunities to incorporate personal experience with Hawaiian folktales. By incorporating patterns of usage familiar to Hawaiian children, and structuring reading instruction around a culturally affirming and familiar speaking style, Au creates some degree of cultural continuity in the classroom. Au reasons that organizing instruction to include and maximize on culturally familiar language and language usage has positive effects on student learning by increasing participation.

Both Piestrup and Au conclude that interactional style can assist or deter students whose home language is not standard English as they increase their language capabilities in the classroom. Teachers who use culturally familiar strategies help their students build learning bridges between their home culture and the culture of school.

Michéle Foster (1989; 1995) draws upon performance theory to analyze the discourse in a community college classroom. It is important to note that Foster's study examines the relationship between a Black teacher and Black students, a situation that is usually absent from research literature on how interactive style affects learning. By analyzing the classroom discourse in a community college management course, Foster distinguishes performance discourse from other classroom discourse and identifies stylistic features or devices such as gestures, intonation, repetition (for emphasis and a common stylistic feature of many Black-English speakers), vowel lengthening and elongation, grammatical structures and use of Black English. These stylistic features or devices are specifically employed by the teacher to assist her students' comprehension of the material she presents. The teacher uses two features frequently, call and response and cross speaker anaphora.

In call and response, the teacher calls out questions and the class responds in unison. When employing the feature of cross speaker anaphora, "the teacher repeats student's responses, echoing their exact words with rising intonation" (Foster, 1989, p. 13). As the discussion was kept moving along by the use of these two features, students enrolled in the management class would exclaim, "It's cookin' now!" a reference to the fact that the discussion was lively and stimulating.

Foster suggests that performance discourse requires active participation and carries a mnemonic function that makes material presented in this way more memorable for African American students. Such participation and the highly stylistic features of such discourse provide cultural continuity. Such a group-centered approach with high levels of participation is "congruent with the group ethos of the Black community" (Foster, 1989, p. 27). Foster (1989, 1995) claims that congruence of instructional style and participant structures influence learning and may improve academic achievement.

"Many of the difficulties African American students encounter in becoming literate result in part from the misunderstandings that occur when the speaking and communication styles of their community vary from those expected and valued in school" (Foster, 1992, p. 303). The functional differences between language use at home and at school effectively disable certain groups of learners, and "various settings or contexts-classrooms, churches, and courtrooms affect the way language is used" (p. 304). Three shared norms for interaction can positively influence literacy instruction and learning for African American children: narrative styles in sharing time, using familiar ways of speaking, especially highly stylized performances, and the use of the Black Artful Way. Foster refers to such interaction as "culturally responsive pedagogy" (p. 308). She cautions, however, that what works in one locale cannot automatically transfer to another location, and she cautions educators against transplanting strategies from one community to the next. "Practitioners must understand the cultural, linguistic and sociolinguistic principles undergirding these practices" (p. 309).

This study suggests that a critical pedagogy for African American children who speak Black English is needed and should be considered. Such a pedagogy would demand the recognition of home languages, including Black English, and require teaching candidates to exit teacher education programs knowledgeable about linguistic and cultural diversity issues.

Mediating Language and Cultural Differences in School Settings and Classrooms

Differences exist in any classroom, school or school district and city in the United States. In America, diversity is a fact of life. However, while culture and language issues are a concern for many elementary educators, not all educators perceive diversity as strength, many see it as an obstacle in their classrooms.

Ken Goodman and Catherine Buck (1973) examine miscue research in an effort to determine why "speakers of low status dialects of English have much higher rates of reading failure than high status dialect speakers" (p. 6). They suggest that the reading failure experienced by so many Black English-speakers is really caused by the lack of teachers' acceptance of Black English, especially when oral reading is involved and that the attitudes of teachers and writers of instructional programs toward the language of African American learners need to change drastically. "Rejection of their dialects and educators' confusion of linguistic difference with linguistic deficiency...undermines the linguistics self-confidence of divergent speakers" (1973, p. 7). They refer to this attitude as linguistic discrimination. By 1973, Goodman had spent nearly ten years studying the reading process among urban youth in Detroit. His conclusions are that dialect does not interfere with the reading process, but teachers' attitudes, acceptance and understanding of linguistic differences is the real impediment faced by many African American children.

Through her teaching and experiences with children, Vivian Paley (1989) has come to believe that children can learn and grow together despite differences in race and social origin. Her book, *White Teacher*, is an examination of her own shift in perceptions, assumptions, and personal prejudices that occurred as her teaching career progressed. Through anecdotal records and personal narrative, Paley illustrates her attempts to help Black children feel more at ease in the White environment of schools. Like Hale-Benson (1986), Paley (1989) is aware of and deeply concerned about the potential for difficulty and misunderstanding that can and does exist when White teachers teach Black children. And, like Hale-Benson, Paley recognizes that her Black students need to be bicultural in order to be successful in mainstream society. Her experiences in the Chicago schools taught her that children have common needs. "The Black child is every child" (Paley, 1989, p. xv). However, she also notes that a child who sees something different about him or herself in relation to others around them has special needs. If that difference is ignored by the teacher, it becomes a concern, a cause for anxiety and oftentimes an obstacle to the child's learning. Paley refers to this as the "problem of Black children and White teachers" (p.11). In terms of language, if teachers, especially White teachers, ignore the language of their students who speak Black English, this negation can be problematic in the classroom. She states that "teaching children with different cultural and language experiences kept pushing me toward the growing edge" (p. 118). By watching her students, observing their language and play, she concludes that "coming to terms with one kind of difference prepares a person for all kinds of differences" (p. 29).

Vivian Paley has learned to recognize, value and celebrate diversity as evidenced by her closing statement in *White Teacher*. It reads, "Our safety lies in schools and societies in which faces with many shapes and colors can feel an equal sense of belonging. Our children must grow up knowing and liking those who look and speak in different ways, or they will live as strangers in a hostile land" (Paley, 1989, p. 139). Paley continues her narrative in *Kawanzaa and Me* (1995) as she recounts her discovery of the African American holiday Kawanzaa and her use of a Kawanzaa doll as a teaching tool. Through her writing, Paley demonstrates how she increases her self-awareness of Black culture through personal inquiry.

My own Masters level research study (Sulentic, 1989) also addresses cultural and language diversity. *Whole Language for High Risk Students: A Descriptive Study,* dubbed "Project Victory," was focused on meeting the language needs of the twenty seventh-grade participants, thirteen of whom were African American. I soon learned that language differences were potentially problematic and that my understanding of Black English and culture was crucial to my ability to teach students and for them to succeed in school.

Additional studies such as Project Victory are needed as teachers face increasing diversity and complexity in school settings.

My Discovery of Black English: Developmental Moments, A-Ha Moments and Defining Moments

Whitmore (1992) describes "developmental moments" as moments that enable perceptive adults to recognize the knowledge-building that occurs within children as part of the entire continuum of language learning. According to Goodman (1990) and Whitmore (1992), children "invent" meaning while immersed in the "conventions" of social and cultural language use. The concept of a "developmental moment" recognizes that the child is able to invent language according to a specific need to communicate. The spoken language "approximations" of many young children, for example, provide observing adults with a "developmental moment" to explain and analyze a child's movement from invented forms of language to more conventional syntax or pronunciation.

Another "moment" term also comes to mind. Jackie Cook (1995), discusses the "A-Ha" moment. This is the moment when a teacher realizes that a student or students have begun to understand or comprehend a concept. Cook suggests that educators "watch carefully for and relish that 'A-Ha' moment," taking as long as necessary to explain to a child who is just beginning to understand (p.31).

My journey toward becoming a teacher included a path that helped me understand Black culture and Black English. Because of Antonio and students like him, I experienced several "A-ha or developmental moments." I knew nothing about Black English until I experienced it firsthand in the classroom.

As a member of the White mainstream majority of America, I speak the standard English of the dominant group. I fumbled and bumbled my way to an understanding and appreciation of Black English as a language, but I was lucky. I gained a valuable perspective on Black culture and Black English through a unique set of circumstances, but it was not conscious and it was not planned, rather I realize that I have experienced what I refer to as "defining moments." To me, defining moments are incidents of reflection on personal growth that lead to further reflection. Defining moments allow me to see myself as a changed individual. Antonio gave me a defining moment.

Cultural Mismatch:
My Personal Experience

As a White, female, middle-income American, my educational background feels very typical and average to me. I graduated with a BA in English in 1979 from the North Central University (NCU), a midsized midwestern university known for its teacher education program. I spent the next several years employed as a substitute high school English teacher, first as a long call substitute in the farming community of Reinbeck, Iowa, followed by two years of subbing in many small districts that surrounded my hometown of Waterloo, Iowa. A move to the Brainerd lakes area of northern Minnesota in July of 1982 again found me subbing in high school English classrooms in that area.

I encountered little diversity in these three situations, culturally or linguistically. Students looked like me, and for the most part, they sounded just like me. In January of 1984, I returned to Waterloo and the following June, was hired by the Waterloo Community district as a seventh grade language arts and reading teacher at West Intermediate. Although I had been raised in Waterloo, I'd attended Catholic schools where the student body shared not only similar cultural and ethnic heritage, but an identical religious heritage as well. My family's economic status was upper-middle income, and I enjoyed the many privileges of that social class: the country club connection, swimming, ballet and piano lessons, private schools and a home full of books and magazines. I was blessed with parents and immigrant grandparents who placed the highest of regards on obtaining an education. Graduating from high school and attending college was never questioned; it was simply expected of me.

Public schools were a world apart from my own schooling experiences. As a brand new hire in the public system, I'd been assigned to what many considered the dumping ground for the district and the proving ground for novice teachers.

In the early 1980s, Waterloo's industrial economy, heavily dependent on agribusiness and related industry such as tractors, farm implement machinery and services, suffered through a financial crisis. Reflective of America's farm crisis at the time, several area factories either shut down completely or endured massive scale backs. The loss of jobs equaled a loss of population. Waterloo schools were deeply affected, nearly twenty school buildings closed in five years. The once thriving downtown area, having barely survived the construction of a mall on the outskirts of Waterloo, was further devastated by closings. In 1984, downtown Waterloo looked like a ghost town.

West Intermediate, one of the Waterloo district's four intermediate schools is located in the area immediately adjacent to the decaying and neglected former business district of Waterloo. Its population was a mixed bag of students. Students came from different backgrounds: social, economic, ethnic, and cultural, with a student population that was 38% African American (*Waterloo Community Schools Strategic Planning Report*, 1988). As I became acquainted with the children in my classes, I was fascinated with the cultural and linguistic differences I encountered and the challenges that different varieties of English presented in my language arts classroom. I wondered how language variation impacted school success. Many of the Black students spoke Black English, a language which I had little exposure to prior to working at this school. I "heard" a difference between the sound of my language and the language of many of my Black students.

Starting to Listen with Different Ears

One of the first things I noticed about my Black students' language was a variation in everyday expressions and phrases. For instance, I heard phrases such as that look good instead of that looks good, cut on or off the light as opposed to turn on or off the light. There were also structural differences in some of my Black students' spoken and written language such as omitted endings like ed and s, doubled endings like I likted that instead of I liked that and a noticeable difference in pronunciation like ax for the word ask and the use of be as a verb instead of am as well as is for are.

Compared to myself and immediate family and friends, the majority of my Black students seemed more verbal to me. Many students used language in highly stylized and ritualistic ways. Kidding or verbal exchanges were viewed by some of my Black students as verbal play. Ralph E. Reynolds, Marsha A. Taylor, Margaret Steffensen, Larry Shirey and Richard C. Anderson (1982) describe verbal play as the "verbal ritual insult predominantly found in the Black community" (p. 353).

These five researchers discovered that those who listen to such verbal play as "sounding" and "playing the dozens," perceive and interpret such speech events very differently based on their cultural orientation. According to Reynolds, et al, Whites often interpret such verbal exchanges as aggressive while Blacks view the same exchanges as actual verbal play or bantering. Many of my students engaged in "ribbing," "playing the dozens," and "ranking," verbal play exchanges in which students tried to either out-talk each other in volume or word choice, or they tried to out-perform one another with insults. I did not always understand this performance aspect of my students' language, and initially I was uncomfortable with it, even perceiving the language of most of my Black students as inappropriate, especially in terms of language learning and literacy. It would be a full ten tears before I could identify these differences as phonologic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic language differences, and to accord these language differences the respect any language deserves.

Stumbling Along My Path

During this time at West Intermediate, I was bothered by what I perceived as my lack of training in the language arts area, especially reading. My initial university preparatory methods courses for my B.A. degree in English education focused almost exclusively on classical British literature, the canon of American literature, linguistics in the United

Kingdom, the history of the English language, and a class in Chaucer. My only true methods course was an eight week summer writing class designed for high school instruction. I was a text book example of Turner's (1996) description of how inadequately English teachers are prepared to teach children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

> The training of most English teachers has concentrated on the appreciation and analysis of literature, rather than on an understanding of the nature of language, and many teachers are, in consequence, forced to take a position on an aspect of their discipline about which they have little information (Turner, 1996, p. 256).

The language variety I encountered in the classroom was never addressed. I felt ill-prepared and inadequate as a teacher. The difference between my language and my students' was obvious, but I really did not know what to do about it. I felt increasingly dissatisfied with my teaching. I was bored. The students were bored. And I knew I was not effective.

In 1986, I returned to that same small midwestern university where I had earned my B.A. and enrolled in a masters degree program. My return to school was prompted by those feelings of ineffectiveness and inadequacy I was experiencing as a language teacher/reading teacher and the constraints I felt with the prescribed curriculum in the district. I felt especially challenged teaching linguistically diverse students, and I needed to learn more about language. There was so much about language differences that I did not know! I pursued a M.A.E. in reading during evenings and summers, and I explored my fascination with differences, especially with regard to language differences.

A Chance Curve in the Path

One night in 1990 I was working late, putting up a bulletin board display in the main hallway of West Intermediate. That evening I met a newly assigned custodian, Zeke, who is African American. His assigned area was the floor where my sixth-grade classroom was located. Working together, we became good friends. One year later his twin sons enrolled in my sixth-grade homeroom and reading class. Our school acquaintance turned to friendship and that friendship deepened. He and I shared an eight-year relationship. This relationship allowed me further access to a culture and language system so different from my own. My day-to-day interactions with Zeke and his children and family helped me to "see" with different eyes and "hear" with different ears regarding language and culture. For instance, it was Zeke who early in our relationship laughingly explained to me one night as I was relaying a story of my teaching day that it was not a compliment when a student referred to me as "Miz Peckerwood." It was Zeke who first explained to me that a "cracker" was Black slang for White people. Through the lens of Zeke's experience I gained an understanding of Black culture and language and a sense of the inseparability of the two. Many times our children struggled to understand each other's language and expressions, and they often talked to each other about language, exclaiming over differences and clarifying phrases and meanings.

Throughout the course of our relationship, cultural conflict remained very real between us. He often asserted that I was "mighty White" when it came to attitudes and preferences. For example, Zeke patiently explained to me that my habit of asking all of our children, his four and my two, to sit down for dinner at night conflicted with his children's familiar experience of "catching a plate" at dinner time. He also claimed that I did not demand the authority and respect he feels I should have demanded from his children. In his eyes, I was too nice and not direct enough when I "step-parented" his children. In less patient times, I often heard him assert that I "had life and bullshit all mixed up!" which really meant that I was approaching a situation with just my "White eyes and ears." I am a changed person, both professionally and personally, because of my relationship with Zeke. According to Freeman and Freeman (1994) I have developed an "intercultural orientation." Reflecting on our past relationship allows me to see many "defining moments" that our time together gave me.

With Zeke as a key informant, I came to enjoy the freedom to ask any question about race, culture and Black

English, knowing I would receive an honest answer from his particular and unique history and perspective. At times it was extremely difficult living with someone of a different race in a city divided along racial lines, in a state so predominantly White. We were both challenged by our decision to cross over racial lines and be a couple. Yet, because of my relationship with Zeke, my understanding of Black culture has grown and my appreciation of Black English has increased, especially my interest in the tensions that exist when Black English-speaking children are thrust into a White school environment. I am a more knowledgeable person and especially a more knowledgeable teacher because of this relationship. In the context of talking with, observing and being around Zeke and his four children and extended family, I witnessed firsthand the ability of Black English-speaking children to change their speech from Black English to standard English, depending on the situation. I can now label this behavior as code-switching.

My unique set of circumstances, interactions with people and deconstructions of events have changed and molded me, both as an individual and as an educator, and have led to my current research agenda and specific questions.

Another Leg of the Journey

In 1993, after four years of teaching seventh grade and five years at the sixth grade level, I decided I needed a different perspective, and that I wanted to truly experience teaching at the elementary level. I transferred within the district to an elementary position. By a stroke of luck, although many of my teaching colleagues thought differently, my elementary assignment was Carver Elementary in Waterloo. I was employed as a Title I reading specialist to provide extra assistance to children in first through fifth grades who had been identified as having difficulty with language learning and literacy.

Carver was a school with the unique distinction of having a student population that was 72.6% African American. I write unique because the school was and is just that, especially when one considers the total African American population in the state of Iowa is roughly 2%. In 1994, of 237 children enrolled in grades kindergarten through fifth, 168 were African American, 65 were white, 2 were Asian and 2 were Hispanic (*Basic Education Data Survey*, 1994). My African American students and their families at Carver were a rich source of learning for me as I observed and experienced their language, their culture, their families and their struggles with standard English in the school setting. African American teaching colleagues became mentors as I experienced my own zone of proximal development regarding my knowledge of the language differences between standard English and Black English. I felt blessed to be at Carver.

While at Carver, I encountered Black children newly arrived from rural Holmes and Atatala County, Mississippi, the point of origin or "home" to a large percentage of Waterloo's Black community. Among these children, I observed a stratification within Black English. Black children born in Waterloo often referred to new arrivals from Mississippi as "talkin' country." I noticed that writing and reading instruction, as I thought I knew it, was especially mismatched and inadequate in terms of meeting the needs of these Black English-speaking students. Language issues were complex. Major (1994) recognizes and validates this stratification. He himself classifies and stratifies Black English. Distinctions such as Major's reinforce my view of Black English as a language.

Continuing the Journey:
Discovering My Path

It is clear that for many African American children, the language of school is very different from the language of home yet this issue is not given adequate attention in pre-service education. In my own teacher education experience, the issue of language diversity did not even surface. My employer, the Waterloo schools, with more than one quarter of its population African American, has never addressed the issue of language diversity in staff development in my fifteen years with the district.

Given the lack of formal support for my questions about linguistic and cultural diversity, I continued to read, study, think, write, and reflect about language on my own. I examined my own practice and relied on colleagues for specific information.

Specifically, I wondered about Black culture and Black English and the tension that exists when children from such home cultures encounter standard English. I thought about how school texts, testing materials, most literature, and the myriad of written materials found in schools as well as well-intentioned White teachers themselves, present a body of knowledge foreign to many children from African American and Black English-speaking homes. I was also interested in how Black families prepare their children for such an environment, and I was interested in how teachers like myself can help understand such a change and facilitate it for their students and families.

My entire eighteen years of experiences as an educator and as a human being have molded me into who and what I am today. I discovered that culture and language differences exist. I learned that recognizing all language systems as valid and accommodating those differences in elementary classrooms are issues too important to be left to happenstance or fortuity. My experiences inspired me to seek out questions and eventual answers.

One area that I truly felt that I needed to explore was the unique history of Waterloo's African American community. Chapter III details my quest for answers about the complete history of Waterloo, Iowa.

CHAPTER III

THE MISSISSIPPI-WATERLOO CONNECTION:
THE HISTORICAL-POLITICAL LAYERS OF THE NEST

ONE-WAY TICKET

I am fed up
With Jim Crow laws
People who are cruel
And afraid,
Who lynch and run
Who are scared of me
And me of them.

I pick up my life
And take it away
On a one-way ticket
Gone up North
Gone out West
Gone!

Langston Hughes (1949)

In rural Mississippi, in an alluvial plain known as the Delta that borders the western edge of the state, are the towns of: Durant, Goodman, Sallis, Tchula, Lexington, Canton, Greenwood, Water Valley and Kosciusko. Set among woods and small cotton and corn fields, these small, rural towns have predominantly Black populations yet they share a strong connection with the town of Waterloo, Iowa, a city with a majority White population that lies in Iowa's northeastern corner.

The connection between Waterloo, Iowa, and the aforementioned communities located primarily in Holmes

County, Mississippi, began in the early 1900s. Although Waterloo's founding citizens were of European descent, the town did include a very small number of Black families prior to 1915. Between 1915 and 1920, Waterloo experienced a significant influx of Black citizens from the Delta area. That migration gave birth to a Black community that has thrived for 75 years on Waterloo, Iowa's East Side. The following paragraphs explain the special history of Waterloo, Iowa's Black Community.

The Great Migration

In the decade between 1910 and 1920, a huge internal migration of African Americans left the rural South for urban areas throughout the United States (Discovery Channel [DC], 1993; University of Mississippi [UM], 1994). The desire for political freedom, social dignity and economic advancement coincided with powerful changes in the American economy to produce one of the largest peacetime migrations in modern history (DC, 1993; UM, 1994). In the early part of the century, sharecropping, cotton picking and mill work provided the mainstay of employment opportunities for African Americans in the South. A combination of racial segregation, poverty, loss of jobs due largely to the mechanization of cotton harvesting, coupled with a crippling boll weevil infestation sparked a vast internal migration of African Americans. A mechanized cotton picker replaced the work which one man did in a day in just one hour, replacing eight to ten men's daily work. Men, women and entire families began to leave the rural South searching for jobs and the promise of economic advancement that urban centers had to offer (DC, 1993; UM, 1994).

The first wave of migration of African Americans began as a movement from the rural South to the urban centers of the South. A majority of the population in such large southern cities as Atlanta, Birmingham, Memphis, Charleston, Savannah, Baton Rouge, Jacksonville, Montgomery, Vicksburg and Shreveport became African American as a result of this migration (UM, 1994). Black men took jobs as urban laborers working in factories, stock yards and meat-packing plants throughout the South. Black women gained employment in southern cities as cooks, nursemaids and domestic workers. Life in the urban South offered African Americans many more job opportunities at better wages than what was available to them in the rural South.

As World War (WW) I (1914-1918) curtailed the stream of European immigrants that northern industries relied on for a workforce, southern Blacks began to migrate to large cities of the North in search of employment and to fill the workforce needs that urban areas demanded. Jobs were plentiful. Workers in northern urban areas averaged $5.00 per day compared to the $3.00 per week they could earn in the South's rural areas. Wages were sometimes ten times more than what was earned in the Mississippi Delta (DC, 1993; UM, 1994).

The North, often referred to by southern Blacks as the "Promised Land", offered real and improved possibilities for African Americans who had been born and lived in the South without the hope of advancement. There was more of a chance to learn a trade in the North, an extended variety of opportunities available, and better overall living conditions (DC, 1993).

This migration of African Americans from rural South to urban South to urban North was the "largest internal migration" in American history (UM, 1994). African Americans who chose to leave their southern rural roots became, in effect, immigrants in their own country.

Oftentimes, men would move north first followed by wives and families. In large families, it was often the eldest who ventured north first, staying with aunts, uncles and other relatives. Once established, the oldest then sent for the next oldest. In other situations entire extended families and frequently, entire communities, left en masse (UM, 1994).

The migration established new Black communities in every major city and created a new urban Black culture (DC, 1994). When the first influx of southern Blacks occurred between 1910 and 1920, the launch point of the migration was the Mississippi Delta, however southern Blacks also left other southern areas in significant numbers (DC, 1993). For many

Mississippians, Chicago was the final destination. Cities such as: East Saint Louis, Missouri, North Philly, Pennsylvania, Watts in Los Angeles, California, New York's Harlem, South Chicago's Bronzeville, Detroit's Paradise Alley, and to a lesser extent, East Waterloo, Iowa, became home to significant numbers of African Americans who migrated from the South and established tightly-knit African American communities in the North and West (UM, 1994). The succeeding figure illustrates the migratory routes established by southern Blacks.

Waterloo's Great Migration

Between 1910 and 1970 the migratory process of African Americans to the city of Waterloo mirrored the migratory process of other African Americans, participants in the great internal American migration, the "Great Migration." Jacqueline Ellis (1986) examines this migratory process calling it the "formative years of Waterloo's Black community" (p. 1). In her study Ellis accomplishes three tasks. She summarizes the migratory process of African Americans to Waterloo from 1910-1970, she identifies, describes and offers analysis of characteristics of changing lifestyles tied to class stratification in Waterloo's Black community, and she explores perceptions held by several individuals who were members of Waterloo's Black community in

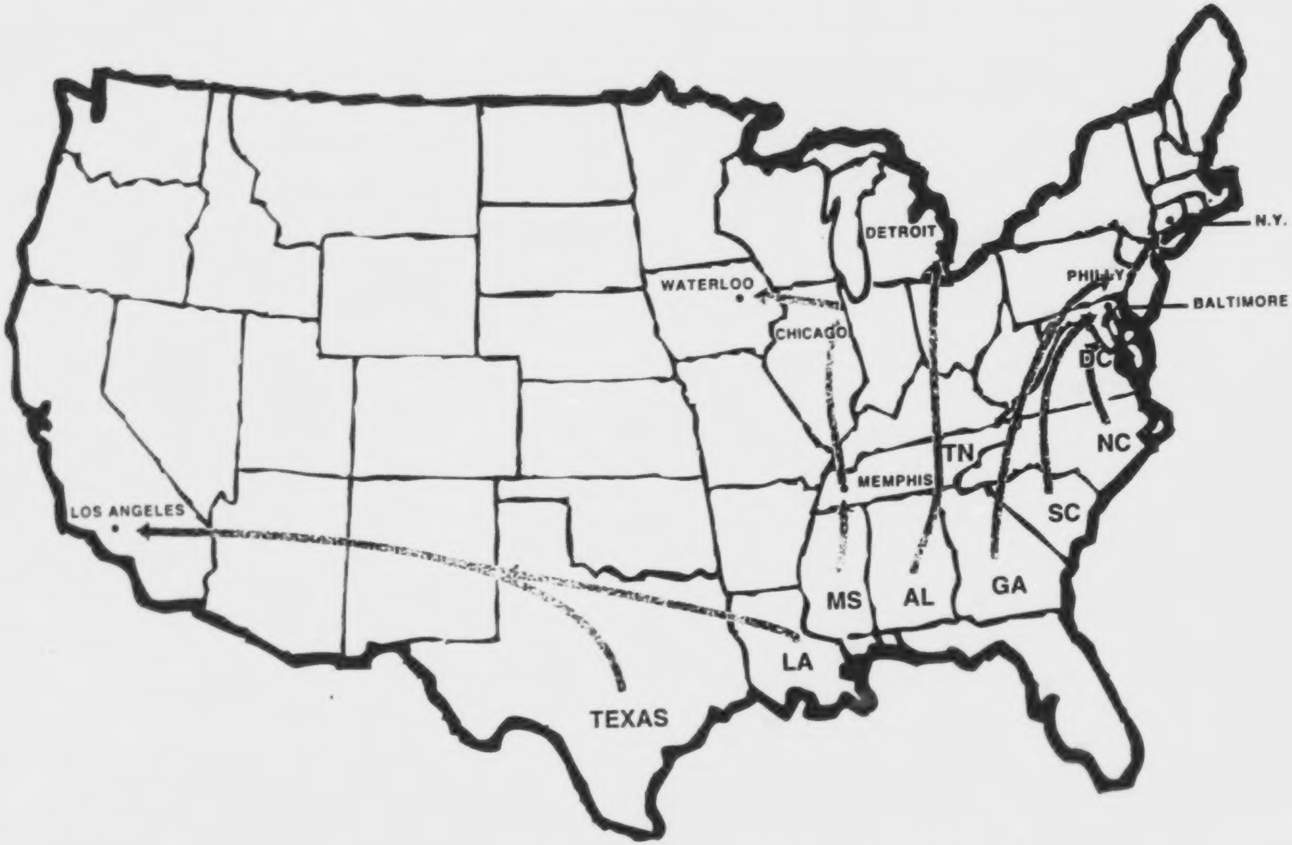
N.Y.
PHILLY
BALTIMORE
DETROIT
WATERLOO
CHICAGO
DC
NC
TN
MEMPHIS
SC
LOS ANGELES
MS
AL
GA
LA
TEXAS

Figure 2. Migration Routes Southern Blacks Followed

Migrating North and West (UM, 1994)

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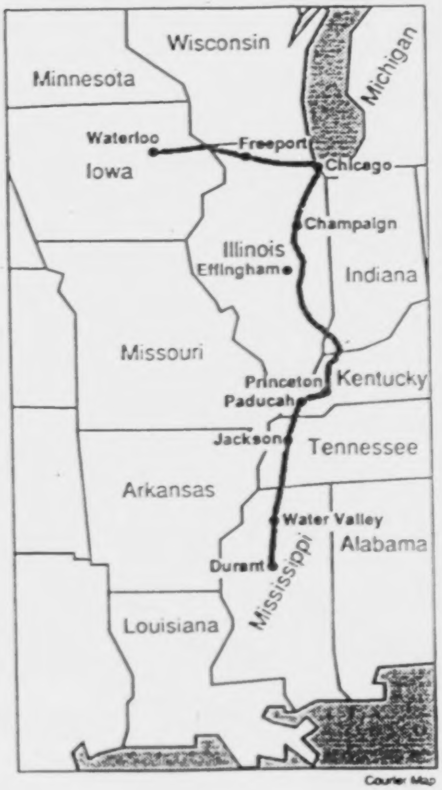
1986. I chose to focus on Ellis's perspective of Waterloo's "Great Migration."

Ellis's sociological study establishes the migration to Waterloo from the South as part of the larger demographic pattern of internal African American migration. She also documents the economic factors that motivated African Americans from Mississippi's Delta to migrate to Waterloo's promise of a better life, the same kind of promise that was a "pull factor" for millions of other southern African Americans seeking economic advancement and security in the cities of the North (Ellis, 1986).

According to the *Waterloo City Directory* (1912) fifty-two African American adults resided in Waterloo in 1911. In late 1911, the Illinois Central Railroad (ICRR) shop in Waterloo, a hub of local railroad activity, experienced a strike. Workers walked off jobs in a dispute with the Harriman lines. In an effort to replace workers, ICRR recruited workers in a ten mile radius in Holmes County Mississippi, located in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. In fact, the railroad offered free passes and housing for those willing to help break the strike (Ellis, 1986).

Gwen Culpepper (1994) also documents the path of Blacks who migrated to the Waterloo area in the early part of the century. Culpepper explains that Waterloo experienced its first large influx of African Americans between 1915 and 1920. According to Ellis (1986) and Culpepper, (1994) some of the early "immigrant" African Americans came from Buxton, a now abandoned southern Iowa mining community, as well as the southern Iowa town of Albia, after soft coal mines in those communities closed. Many others came from rural Holmes County, Mississippi, and a few came from Southeastern states. The early arrivals were strike breakers for the Illinois Central Railroad. Jobs were available on the ICRR, and many of these early Black citizens had worked on the railroad in Mississippi, near Durant. "When workers in Iowa went on strike, the railroad recruited and transported a number of Southern workers to break the strike" (Culpepper, 1994, p. C1). This influx of African American citizens into the community forever changed Waterloo, Iowa. The next figure traces the route followed by many rural Mississippians who migrated to Waterloo, Iowa, in search of employment on the Illinois Central line.

Ellis (1986) claims that between 1912 and 1915 33% of the Black workers who came to Waterloo to work on the railroad were from that ten mile radius in Holmes County, Mississippi. She describes how these Mississippi "immigrants" lived in a segregated area of Waterloo known as "the Black section" located on the east side of the Cedar River near the ICRR shop. For the earliest arrivals, boxcars


Minnesota
Wisconsin
Michigan
Waterloo
Freeport
Chicago
Iowa
Champaign
Illinois
Effingham
Indiana
Missouri
Princeton
Kentucky
Paducah
Jackson
Tennessee
Arkansas
Water Valley
Alabama
Durant
Mississippi
Louisiana

Courier Map

The first influx of blacks to Waterloo took place between 1915 and 1920. Many of these people worked on the railroad in Mississippi, near Durant. When workers in Iowa went on strike, the railroad recruited and transported a number of Southern workers to break the strike. This map details the route taken from Mississippi to Iowa.

Figure 3. Migration Routes Mississippians Followed Migrating to Iowa (Culpepper, 1994)

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were provided by the ICRR as temporary housing near Sumner Street. By 1915, a Black neighborhood had been established in Waterloo, Iowa.

> The emerging Black district called the African American Historic Triangle by local historians-filled a triangle bounded by the Illinois Central tracks, Sumner and Mobile Streets, about 20 square blocks in all. It was less than 15% Black in 1915. But this triangular neighborhood was 94% Black five years later (Graves, 1998, p. I2).

This triangular neighborhood was virtually the only area in Waterloo where African Americans migrating from the South could find a place to live (Ellis, 1986; Graves 1998). Figure 4 details the historic Black section of Waterloo, Iowa, commonly called the triangle.

The triangle-shaped community on Waterloo's east side continued to grow until the 1930's Great Depression when relatively few new "immigrants" surfaced in Waterloo. A second, smaller wave of migration from the rural South to the urban North occurred in the 1940s and coincided with WW II (UM, 1994). During World War II, Waterloo experienced another influx of African Americans from the rural south. Between 1950 and 1960, the African American population of Waterloo doubled. Ellis (1986) offers the following figures: in 1960, 4,765 African Americans resided in Waterloo, in 1970, 6,505 African Americans were counted as residents of Waterloo, and in 1980, Waterloo was home to 8,239 African Americans. Currently, 66,467 people reside in Waterloo and 8,068 are African American (US Bureau of the Census, 1990).

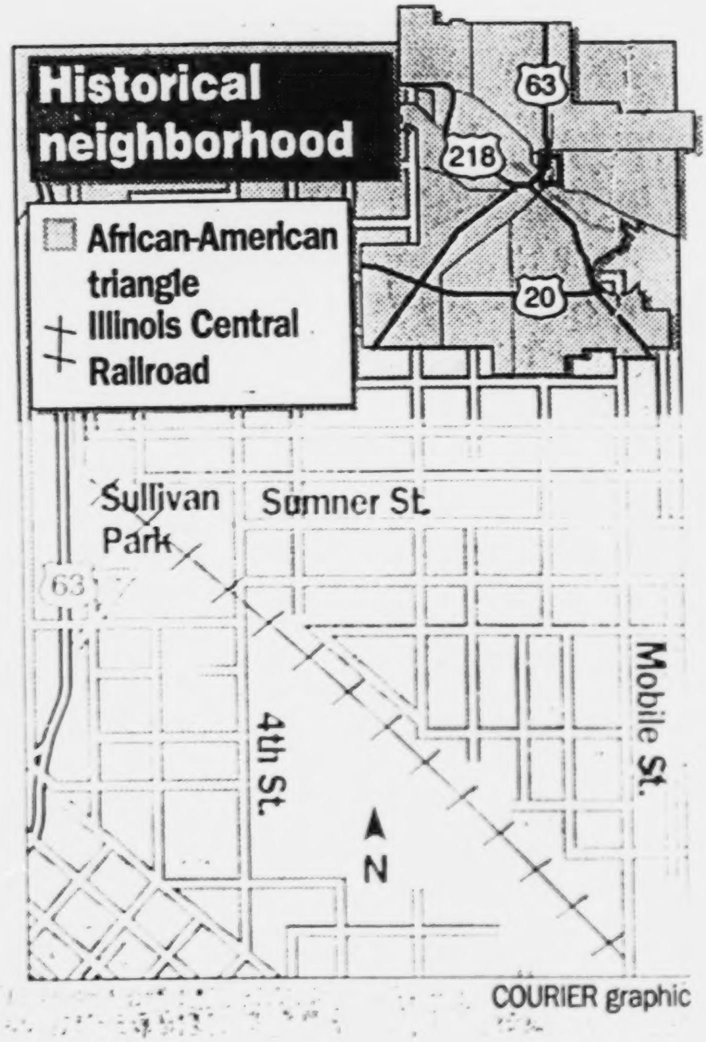
Historical neighborhood
☐ African-American triangle
Illinois Central Railroad
63
218
20
Sullivan Park
Sumner St.
63
4th St.
Mobile St.
N
COURIER graphic

Figure 4. Waterloo's African American Historic Triangle

Graves (1998)

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The Black community in East Waterloo, Iowa, has grown and thrived since it was established in the early 1900s. However, like African American communities in other northern urban areas, Waterloo's Black community has also remained segregated.

James Day (1972) studies speech and language behaviors. In his Masters study, he attempts to compare the language features of African American speakers who reside in Waterloo, Iowa, with speakers residing in Holmes County, Mississippi. Day's analysis of the language of these two groups of African Americans, Mississippians and Iowans, is inconclusive, however; what interests me personally in Day's study is his examination of the segregation of Waterloo's African American community. Specifically, Day scrutinizes the ability of African Americans to move to any section of Waterloo. Basing his work on the segregation index developed by Karl Taeuber (1970), Day reports that "Waterloo ranks as more segregated than any city where a sociolinguistic study has been done, except Chicago. Waterloo then, is more segregated than Detroit, New York, or Washington, D.C." (Day, 1972, p. 12).

Day's findings are significant when one examines the historical context of his study, the 1970s, and the rampant racial segregation that still exists in northern urban areas with significant Black populations. This forced segregation resulted in the establishment and maintenance of a tightly-knit Black community in Waterloo, Iowa. The urban concentration of Blacks has remained constant in Waterloo and most African Americans living in Waterloo have also maintained strong, vibrant ties with their Mississippi roots. According to Day, "ninety-five percent of Waterloo's [Negro] population can trace their origin, directly or indirectly, to Holmes County, Mississippi" (p. 10).

Linguist Timothy Riney, (1990; 1993) like Culpepper, (1994) bolsters the findings of both Ellis, (1986) and Day (1972) in describing the distinct origins and continuing Mississippi ties of the Black community in Waterloo, Iowa. In his study, Riney (1990) documents the existence of Black English in Waterloo, Iowa, examines how Waterloo Black English contrasts with the surrounding majority language (Midland Vernacular), investigates attitudes toward language and considers educational implications based on the results of his study.

Riney examines the speech of African Americans in Waterloo from a sociolinguistic perspective, referring to Black English as Vernacular Black English (VBE). He is predominately interested in how misinformation and controversy surrounding language differences affects attitude toward speakers.

Identifying the language of Waterloo's majority White population as "Vernacular Midland" Riney compares it to the language of a group of thirty randomly selected African Americans whom he encounters at a local Waterloo softball complex. His findings indicate that the VBE spoken in Waterloo's Black community differs significantly from the language of the surrounding White majority, yet the language differences that occur in Waterloo, Iowa, are ignored (Riney, 1990; 1993). To illustrate, Riney parallels the language situation he observes in Waterloo with the Ann Arbor decision of 1979.

The Ann Arbor, Michigan, decision (Labov, 1982; Scott & Smitherman, 1985) or the King case, as it was known, addressed the complex situation of language difference. A group of African American parents challenged the Ann Arbor, Michigan, Board of Education declaring that many of Ann Arbor's teachers perceived African American children's home language (VBE) as inferior, in effect, rejecting the students' native language. The parents of African American children in Ann Arbor who spoke VBE maintained that their children were at risk of academic failure when teachers did not understand VBE. In a landmark decision, the verdict of the King case was that: 1) teachers were required to study concepts about language in workshops, 2) teachers were instructed to become aware of public attitudes toward language differences and dialects, and 3) teachers were directed to become knowledgeable about the structure of their students' language (Labov, 1982; Scott & Smitherman, 1985 and Riney, 1990; 1993).

A full decade after the King decision, Riney questions the prevailing negative attitude he encounters in Waterloo and nearby Central Heights, Iowa toward dialect speakers or language minority speakers of VBE who reside largely in Waterloo. Riney theorizes that negative attitudes toward a child's language transfer directly to the child (Riney, 1990; 1993).

As a linguist Riney first observed that VBE was spoken in Waterloo but was basically absent from Central Heights. His search of descriptive language studies conducted in Iowa failed to mention even the existence of VBE in Waterloo, Iowa. This led him to the Iowa Department of Education where he inquired about the existence of VBE in Waterloo followed by a request for an estimation of VBE speakers in the city. The educational consultant he contacted first claimed "that population [VBE speakers] is not in Iowa," but when Riney called back and asked for further clarification, that same consultant responded that "VBE is, in fact, spoken in Waterloo, but because 'Black English' is so widely 'misunderstood' by the public, it is probably better not to call attention to the presence of the dialect" (Riney, 1993, p. 83). Riney subsequently contacted eight teachers and officials of the Waterloo school district who stated that Black English did exist, but according to Riney, all eight shared the opinion that it was better not to draw attention to the language difference as they felt the general public equated difference with deficit. Riney notes that at the time of his study, a study of Black English had never been conducted in Waterloo and in fact, most studies of Black English, such as those discussed elsewhere this paper, had been conducted in either the large metropolitan areas of the North or in the rural South, but never in the Midwest.

Much like Ellis (1986) and Culpepper, (1994) Riney grounds his study by first documenting and describing the migration of African Americans from Mississippi to Waterloo. Riney asserts that these "immigrants" from Mississippi brought their speech with them to Waterloo. "Waterloo's VBE is related to a Southern VBE variety" (Riney, 1993, p.88). Juxtaposing the two dominant varieties of English found in the community, Riney states that the "structures of Waterloo's VBE, however, seldom or never occur in Vernacular Midland" (Riney, 1993, p. 85).

Similar to the work previously discussed by Labov (1972) and Dillard (1972), Riney identifies seven structures found in Waterloo's VBE. These structures offer phonological evidence that the VBE spoken in Waterloo differs significantly from the Midland Vernacular spoken by the majority of Waterloo's White population. Table 5 highlights those structures.

Table 5. Phonological Structures Found in Waterloo, Iowa's VBE (Riney, 1993)

1. Cluster reduction
2. [f] / [th] correspondence
3. initial [th] voiced as [d]
4. disappearing glottal stops
5. deletion of final [r]
6. deletion of auxiliary verbs
7. subject verb agreement

The African American population in Waterloo has remained segregated since it was first established in the early 1900s (Day, 1972; Riney, 1993). Strong continuing ties and kinship bonds to family remaining in Mississippi, has created a "speech island" of VBE speakers within the African American community in Waterloo, Iowa. "The presence of a VBE speech island isolated for decades in a smaller urban community in northern Iowa raises a number of questions" (Riney, 1993, p. 92). Riney questions why the existence of VBE in Waterloo is rarely acknowledged, and he calls for further studies to explore, in Waterloo and elsewhere in the Midwest, attitudes toward dialect that affect perceptions of dialect speakers. He laments that linguists have done such a poor job of communicating knowledge about language differences to the public. He asks, what should linguists and language educators do about the nature of language differences? Riney calls for a reconsideration of the Ann Arbor King case pointing out that if a variety of English such as the VBE that exists in Waterloo is not publicly acknowledged by either local school officials or by representatives of the state's Department of Education, how can that denial affect Waterloo teachers' attitudes toward the natural language of many of their students?

Riney then turns the spotlight on teacher education in the case of Waterloo and its 8000 member African American community and the nearby North Central University when he notes that "a university with a student body that is only two percent Black supplies a neighboring school district that is twenty-one percent Black with the majority of the district's teachers. That district sends very few Black high school graduates back to the neighboring university" (Riney, 1993, p.91). I believe that Riney possesses the answers to his own questions as he concludes with the commentary, "legitimacy and equality of all dialects, however, has never been accepted--not even in principle--by the public at large" (Riney, 1993, p.93).

In the decades that have followed since the two waves of African American migration into Waterloo, Iowa, a continued migration of family and friends from Holmes County, Mississippi has increased Waterloo's African American population to the largest urban concentration of Blacks in Iowa even though Waterloo is just the fifth-largest city in Iowa (Riney, 1990; 1993). The unique origins of Waterloo's

African American community, southern, rural and predominantly from an area of the Mississippi Delta, and the effects of racial segregation, make the Black community in Waterloo a closed community, not sharing geographical boundaries with any other minority group.

The existence of a vibrant African American community and its continued ties to a specific area of the Mississippi Delta are confirmed by a casual collection of obituaries gathered between January 1994 and March 1998. The obituaries describe elderly African American residents of Waterloo. An informal survey of the obituaries collected during this period indicate that the majority of elderly African Americans who had died during the four year collection period of this study most frequently listed their birthplace as Durant, Water Valley, Sallis, Tchula, Lexington, Greenwood, Kosciusko, or simply Holmes County, Mississippi.

For numerous members of Waterloo's Black community, the connections to Mississippi have remained strong. It is not uncommon for children enrolled in Waterloo schools, and their families, to return to Holmes County and other destinations in the rural Mississippi Delta to visit and stay with extended family for funerals, weddings, and other family events as well as major holidays. It is also not uncommon for Black students to migrate back and forth between the two locations and to enroll in both the Waterloo and Mississippi schools when family matters dictate. The Black population in

Waterloo remains tied to its Mississippi roots, yet this established connection is seldom recognized and rarely validated by school personnel.

For instance, I have recurrently heard White administrators and teachers question why African American families would pull their children out of school for extended visits to Mississippi. When a White family decides to pull their children out of school to take an extended family vacation to Europe or the Caribbean, teachers celebrate the event seeing it as an enriching experience; however, when an African American family decides to take their children out of school to travel to Mississippi, usually to visit relatives at family events such as deaths, marriages, births and illness, the prevailing attitude of teachers and administrators is to mock the parents and child. The connection to Mississippi is ignored. A part of a child's background and existence is also ignored. In essence, the child is ignored.

As exhibited by many of my former and current colleagues in the Waterloo schools, White teachers are ill-equipped and ill-suited to teach African American children. On the part of some White teachers, their glaring lack of awareness, much less understanding of the Black children they are hired to teach, is a real detriment. Ignorance and an unwillingness to adjust curriculum and instruction to meet the specific needs, especially language needs of Black students, has sometimes exemplified my experiences with these teachers.

A past incident provides an example of such a complete lack of awareness. This incident occurred while I was still a teacher at Carver. A first year teacher who was raised in nearby Central Heights and graduated from NCU, made a caustic comment one noon lunch period. According to my recollection, this first year teacher entered the teachers' lounge complaining loudly to the staff members assembled there that six of his students would be gone for an entire week! He was obviously disgusted. He repeatedly questioned aloud why parents would pull children from school for an entire week. He then went on to exclaim that, to his astonishment, these students' destination was Mississippi! He made some sort of comment about how he was not aware that Mississippi was such a hot vacation spot for African American families from Waterloo. He said this sarcastically and with great disdain. The staff members gathered there for lunch listened to him politely but no one responded. I remember thinking he was just so obviously ignorant about his students from Waterloo, failing to acknowledge and validate the experiences of his students.

After the vacation spot remark, he then regaled those seated at the lounge table with how funny it was to him that the six missing students represented just two different families and were all related to one another. "Can you believe that?" he kept asking to no one in particular. "They are ALL related!" It just so happened that the school-aged children in question were cousins to one another and were all enrolled in his class.

Again, I identified a real lack of knowledge, of understanding, of acceptance, between this White teacher and his Black students. I can also recall feeling very sad that such an individual was working at Carver. I actually felt that he was harmful to many students. If such an individual could be raised in the nearby town of Central Heights, and graduate from its university, NCU, yet fail to acknowledge, validate and accept the culture of his African American students, then what sort of attitudes would he have toward their language? This exchange and what it signifies lies at the crux of this study.

A Story of Personal Migration

As a teacher, I believe that knowing as much as I can about my students enables me to be able to plan the most appropriate instruction. I applied this same logic to my dissertation. I felt that I needed to explore the perceptions of a Black community member in regard to cultural and linguistic differences and the school system. I needed to balance my perspective with that of one of Waterloo's most esteemed African American citizens.

One of my key informants was Mr. Jackie Parker. I selected Mr. Parker because he exemplified the "voices" of Waterloo's Black Community. That is not to say that Mr. Parker unilaterally represents every Black citizen in Waterloo. He does not. However, his stature in Waterloo's Black Community places him in a unique and distinguished position of leadership. Jackie Parker is president and CEO as well as founder of KBAM. KBAM FM are the call letters for African American Community Broadcasting, Inc., a Black-owned radio station broadcasting out of Waterloo. KBAM was founded in 1977 to serve the needs and interests of Waterloo's Black Community, and it is committed to providing programming designed for Waterloo's African American community. Today, KBAM is the largest African American owned and operated non-commercial education radio station in Iowa.

In addition to being CEO of KBAM, Jackie Parker is also the creator of The Black Community Enabler Developer Program, an outreach program that provides employment opportunities for African American youth in the Waterloo area. I sought out Mr. Parker's opinions because I felt he was able to offer an honest and extremely informed perspective. I perceive him as representative of many of Waterloo's Black citizens. Mr. Parker has earned a great deal of respect from both Waterloo's White, mainstream community and the well-established Black community. I also selected Mr. Parker because he migrated to Waterloo from Lexington, Mississippi in 1948, establishing himself as an "immigrant" from the South and as a representative or member of the second wave of Waterloo's Great Migration. Mr. Parker is often perceived as an icon of Waterloo's Black community.

Jackie Parker is sixty-eight years old. He is approximately six feet tall. His hair is worn short and is graying at the temples. As we interview, he speaks most of the time, and I am mesmerized by the cadence of his measured and melodic voice. I find him articulate and passionate. There is a sagelike quality about him, something ancient and wise. Yet a barely contained anger glows beneath his words. Through the conversations of our interview, I sense his deep commitment to Waterloo's future, especially the Black community. At one point I tell him that he is a wonderful story teller, so captivated am I by his statements.

Mr. Jackie Parker was born in July of 1931, in the Mississippi Delta town of Lexington. His father died when he was less than five years of age leaving a family of seven, with the oldest just ten years old. According to Mr. Parker, at the time of his death his father was a "yard boy," a person who was employed taking care of lawns. After his father's death, his mother worked hard as a "domestic" making just $3.00 per week, to keep the family together. After a period of time, it just became impossible for his mother to keep the family intact. At the age of eight, he left

Lexington and went to Tunica, a Mississippi Delta town just thirty miles outside of Memphis. Mr. Parker lived with relatives in Tunica from October 1939 until November 1947 when he traveled to Jackson, Mississippi, to join his family for a while. Toward the end of 1948 at the age of seventeen and during the second wave of migration from the Delta, he "migrated" to Waterloo in search of economic opportunities.

Initially, Mr. Parker came to Waterloo believing he was coming to the "Promised Land," prepared to fulfill his expectations of finding his "place in the sun." At the age of seventeen Mr. Parker had assumptions that Iowa, the North, would be different from his native Mississippi in terms of economic advancement. Like thousands of southern African Americans from Mississippi who had migrated to Waterloo before him, he came looking for more opportunity because he did not like where he came from. His family had high expectations for him, too, and many family members voiced their yearning to be going North also. They figured Mr. Parker would have more opportunities for advancement in Waterloo, Iowa, than anywhere in Mississippi.

Mr. Parker was sorely disappointed.

> I come to Waterloo, Iowa believing that I was coming to the promised land. And I found the land. And I found that I was actually leaving a better place then I had found based upon some of the things that I had experienced. I had learned to live with, no matter if I liked it or not, I had learned to live within the framework of Mississippi. And pretty well knew the things I shouldn't do and the things I was supposed to do. And it wasn't until I came to Iowa that I

> experienced the denial of a job. In Mississippi we were segregated by school, race, by social status but I found that those was obvious. I could see them. They wasn't like a glass wall between us and the White community. And I found that even though there was separation, I didn't experience as much, I figure, discrimination because most of the things I would have liked to enjoy, we had 'em. We had our own. So it wasn't a matter that I needed to venture into White America in order to find some of the things that I enjoyed in life. So I came to Iowa. And it was the greatest shock experience I had in my life. At that time, I was 17 1/2 years of age and if it hadn't been that they had given me such a going away. And most of it was on a basis, "I sure wish we were gonna join you because you are going where they tell me that all you have to do is be prepared to fulfill expectations and you'll find your place in the sun." That is -work, quality of work, race will not have no major issue. And it'd be on the basis that you'd get what you earned. So I came to Iowa under those expectations, and need I say that if it hadn't been for the fact that they believed that, I didn't want to go back and tell them different, so I stayed.

Mr. Parker was shocked to see how "domesticated" African Americans were who lived in Waterloo. He felt they accepted their segregated living conditions, conditions that included a lack of encouragement by school personnel toward African American youth to obtain a first class education. In Mr. Parker's opinion, school personnel conveyed the idea that there was no point in higher education when jobs were readily available in the mill room and foundry at John Deere's. Jackie Parker believes that "Waterloo have a strong racial problem".

Mr. Parker was also shocked by how African Americans in Waterloo treated their southern counterparts. In his words, they had learned to be critical of their southern cousins ridiculing their dress and especially the way they talked, which Mr. Parker terms "talking southern." In fact, since the time of his arrival, African Americans residing in Waterloo would measure themselves by how well they were doing compared to newly-arrived African Americans from the South.

Mr. Parker's perspective on how northern Blacks viewed the speech patterns of southern Blacks replicates many of the conversations I overheard as a teacher in the Waterloo schools. Simple comments familiar to my teaching experience like, "Why you talkin' so country?" mirrored Mr. Parker's own experiences. Such conversations and perspectives illuminate the stratification and ensuing language classification that occurs with differences in Black English according to birth place.

Language stratification and subsequent classification and the ensuing and varied perspectives toward variances within Black English mark it as a distinct language complete with acrolects and basilects. In view of such attitudes and subsequent condescending comments, Mr. Parker offers that with regard to language, understanding or comprehending what is or has been said is paramount, the manner in which something was said should be secondary. Mr. Parker believes that negative attitudes toward language and the cultural background of the speaker negatively transfer to children. Mr. Parker suggests that the Waterloo schools accept students based upon how well those students relate to the mainstream.

> If students don't measure up, then we can always put a label on them and fit them where we want them.

My interview with Jackie Parker revolved around several basic questions related to his opinion regarding the kind of education African American children in Waterloo receive (see Appendix D). His response to my question, "What is the state of education for the average African American child in Waterloo?" was simply, "Very poor." The condition of education for Black children in Waterloo is "poorer than the schools want to admit or believe it is." Mr. Parker lays the blame for the condition of education for Black children squarely on the shoulders of the school administration stating that the administration is made of individuals "who would rather follow than lead." He passionately believes that the Waterloo schools have failed to meet the needs of African American students in terms of recognizing and validating cultural differences including language variation. Simply put, Mr. Parker is convinced that the Waterloo Public School System ignores difference.

> Everybody that has come to this country hae been allowed to catch up. They make special provision. Not only in language and in their liing style and also their foods and the recognition of days in their culture within the school system. But there have never been an adjustment made upon people of Afro-American decent. You must fit in or we will put a label on you and then we'll send you to one of these schools over here, or we'll send you someplace just to contain you because we get paid for it.

Mr. Parker is convinced that the deep feeling that he receives from American society that as an African American, he is a subhuman being, has transferred to African American children in Waterloo. He believes schools are part of that transmission process.

Jackie Parker is a passionate man, and at many points in our interview his indignation toward the school system spilled out. Despite his calm and even voice his eyes became bright with anger several times during our interview as he spoke about his observations. He would take a huge breath, as if to calm himself and then he would eloquently answer my next question. One question, "How well is the average white teacher in Waterloo prepared to teach the average African American child?", brought a particularly impassioned response.

Mr. Parker believes that for the most part, White education majors and White teachers come to Waterloo with their only experience of African Americans and African American culture coming from the media. He laments this situation and believes that teachers' lack of exposure to cultural diversity results in White teachers in Waterloo having low expectations for their African American students. Mr. Parker questions how education majors from small towns or rural Iowa can teach African American children when they don't know the language and culture of the child.

> How can you teach someone or develop something when you have no knowledge of it? You must know something about the product if you're gonna grow it.

Mr. Parker questions the degree of preparedness of average teachers.

> There are too many teachers of the sameness. That's just like Waterloo's Afro-American people, one of the things that is unfortunate, too many of us came from the same place. When I came to Waterloo and for about 5 or 6 years after that, 75% of us came from that same 10 mile radius [in the Delta of Mississippi]. And we brought the strengths and the weakness with us. Don't necessarily mean that was bad but that was not enough mixture. Waterloo, I mean the University of (Northern) Iowa, usually most of the persons that are being taught there, come from a background that this is the furthest distance they ever been away from home. And they have learned, and they are taught, there is only one way of doing things, whether it's good or bad and that is, this way, this way. There's not enough mixture, there's not enough mixture of different lifestyles that's coming to be part of that. We can learn from each other. And there's not enough of that at NCU. And secondly, NCU is not preparing teachers to go into the real world. It was okay in 1935 and '45 and up to the '50s, but then we had to not look at Iowa as a leader going back to these little towns and teaching. We now have to look at the total picture, globally, as a result of that, we find ourself, we can deal with it academically, not successful, but socially we don't measure up because we're not making an attempt to do it.

I was a classic example of the kind of teacher Mr. Parker described when he stated that, "I see some teachers now who have no idea how to deal with this Black student in their classroom." Mr. Parker's description perfectly describes and echoes my experiences as an undergraduate student at NCU. The result of not understanding and knowing much about language diversity was a detriment to me in the classroom.

During the course of our interview, Mr. Parker offered several solutions to what he perceives as inadequate teacher preparation:

1. teachers should have high expectations for African-American students;
2. the Waterloo district needs to provide inservice training for teachers, especially new White teachers, conducted by parents and family members who reside in the neighborhoods where schools are located; parents, not outside experts, must be included when inservicing teachers as parents are the experts when it comes to their children and should be recognized as such;
3. stop warehousing students;
4, stop failing African American students and then turn around and blame their cultural difference, and
5, ensure that the social behavior and lifestyles of African Americans be recognized, validated and accommodated in school just like every other group of people who have come into the Waterloo school system.

My question about the degree of preparedness exhibited by Waterloo's average White teacher quite naturally led to my questions about Mr. Parker's views on language diversity and finally, his opinions about how teacher preparation at the university level can be improved to ultimately result in more qualified and realistically prepared teachers in Waterloo classrooms. Mr. Parker's responses indicate his vast knowledge of his community and confirms the views of Hale-Benson (1986) and Delpit (1995) that a gap exists between many Black children and their White teachers.

Mr. Jackie Parker is a huge advocate of education. His knowledge of his own community is a resource that the Waterloo district has failed to tap. "The Waterloo schools need to deal with the family and the school." In his own words he describes his vision for a better future in the Waterloo schools for African American children.

> Until we have each one share in the responsibility of raising that child, we'll continue to do as we do now. Don't laugh at [African American] language and culture, provide a period of transition. It's no difference than what we do with anybody else! We take a person that coming to school and we going through that right now! The Bosnian and other groups have come into this country the first thing we do is not laugh at them when they come to school, but deal with a period of transition. You must learn the English language and it's taught in such a way that it's not a reflection of you or where you come from. We don't sit there and damn the home, we don't sit there and damn how they talk, we sit there and says, the way you talk, that was the language of the home, but now we must teach you also the language of this [school and society] that you gonna be judged by in days to come. There's no difference! I see no difference! But take into consider where I come from as you deal with where I should go. I'm a strong believer in that. It [language] should be corrected, it should be taught, but don't cripple the person in the process. This child come to school being taught the language of his home. And you must deal with that not that that's bad. That is all right there, but here is what we must also learn here at school.

Rhetorically Mr. Parker asks, "How do we 'correct' something without stunting its growth?" Without so much as a pause or nod in my direction, he answers his own question.

> And we should deal with it [language or linguistic diversity] as necessary and not as a put down. And that's what has happened too often. And it happened especially among Black folk. And I am, you see here a look of anger, because I was exposed to this. I had a third, [no a] fifth grade teacher that crippled me as far as talking. And I don't think I've ever gotten over it. She always said, What's the correct way of saying it? And I started concentratin' more on how I had to say it, rather than what I was gonna say. And as a result of that I was so afraid to say something the wrong way that many time I would start and stop and you know to this day, I still have that as a habit.

Mr. Parker's parting comments left me with an empty, sad feeling as I listened to the anger in his voice as he labeled this situation as racist.

> This kind of situation wouldn't happen to anyone else. White America wouldn't send their child to a 100% Black faculty school.

Mr. Parker concluded our interview by thanking me. With a smile he said,

> It's always good to sit down and visit about something that you like to see. Although you can never really give up on it, I don't have the hopes that I used to. I think it's because I see the same ground plowed over and over again. I am not at this time, hopeful. I had thought two things would happen. I had thought that based on history that we would not see it repeat itself and that is by this time America would realize it had to give attention to some of these educational needs. To deal with this anger and this rage that exist in Black America. Building more institutions and hiring more policemen is not the answer to what they gotta deal with. I see America at this time, almost putting itself into the same position as the 50s, 60s and into 70s. That is, a lot of persons that could be useful now is losing their face and confidence in America. And I keep wondering will we learn to hate before they, White

> America can learn to love? Or will it take more riots? To bring us back to the table to negotiate?

In the remaining minutes of the interview, Mr. Parker paused, pain etched in his wise and handsome face. He spoke slowly and softly and offered me these words.

> Well, I don't know, if there gonna be a change and there need to be, I just wonder will White America realize that before it's too late? I don't like what I see. And I don't like to see what Black America is becoming. It bothers me. And have we reached the point where we see a reversal. I remember a time when I better not be caught across the river at night. And I see a reversal of that. I hear a White mother say don't you go over to that North end. Has that been a gain? I don't think so.

Mr. Parker's parting words haunt me.

> Will the powers that be within the Waterloo Community Schools realize that changes need to be made in order for African American children to enjoy a measure of success?"

I agree with Mr. Parker who wonders, will that realization come too late? Has there been a gain for children of color who attend Waterloo schools? I echo Mr. Parker's words, "I don't think so..."

Quite often during our interview, I was struck by the infinite wisdom of this man. His situatedness, an outsider's view of education, but an insider's view of Waterloo's Black Community provides a rich, informed perspective of events that have happened in regard to the system.

Conclusion

The establishment and existence of Waterloo's 75-year-old Black community has never been fully recognized much less appreciated. Except for the two years I spent living in northern Minnesota, I am a life-long resident of Waterloo, yet the history of Waterloo's African American community was unknown to me until recently. As a girl, my family moved from the East side of Waterloo to the West side of town, an upwardly mobile move that illustrated the growing affluence of my family. A second move to a newly-established west-side neighborhood secured my family's economic status. Both moves also served to further isolate me from the Black community. In fact, as a child my only contacts with African Americans were the weekly visits by a Black woman domestic worker who cleaned our home and the brief glimpses I caught of African Americans during the quick drives through Black neighborhoods as my parents transported us children to the luxury and affluence of the local country club. It was if Waterloo was really two cities, one White and middle-income and full of people who spoke what I now recognize as a speech pattern called Midland Vernacular, and the other section peopled by African Americans who spoke Black English. The special history of Waterloo's African American community was kept from me like a carefully hidden secret. My own inquiry has revealed the "other" story of my hometown. As an educator within the local school system, it has been my experience that the remarkable and extraordinary history of Waterloo's Black community is rarely validated much less celebrated by the system, and the language differences among the two oldest segments of Waterloo's population remains hidden and neglected.

Racial segregation may partially explain the striking differences between the varieties of English found among the Black and White residents of Waterloo. Segregation's evolving pattern of exclusion has resulted in further isolation that is still in strong evidence today.

As a professor at nearby NCU, Riney calls for a careful study of the language and attitudes toward language that exist in the Waterloo area, especially within the school system. Dialectism, "a language prejudice that cuts across social categories of race and gender" is alive and thriving in Waterloo (Riney, 1993, p. 83). Mr. Parker echoes Riney's sentiments when he asks why the current school administration has gone to such lengths to welcome and accommodate newly arrived Bosnian immigrants when no administration, past or present, has acknowledged, validated or attempted to accommodate the African American students of Waterloo. As a simple starting point he recommends more exposure to urban culture at the university level. In his words, "[preservice] teachers need to be exposed to what they would be faced with later."

Riney, an outsider or observer offers what anthropologists call etic (outside) analysis to the educational system of Waterloo. Mr. Parker, an insider or participant who lives and works in the community, offers an emic (inside) analysis. Both draw the same conclusion and draft similar suggestions. The community of Waterloo, Iowa, including its school system, needs to serve all its citizens. This certainly includes assisting African American students who speak Black English to master the conventions of standard English while at the same time sensitizing and informing teachers about the rich and unique cultural heritage of Waterloo's Black community and the particular language needs of many of its children.

A study that examines the issues of language diversity, specifically Black English, in Waterloo, Iowa, is needed. In my study I investigated how and why two teachers validate Black English, demonstrate and encourage code-switching, and facilitate the acquisition of standard English within their classrooms. I also investigated how Black English-speaking children at Carver Elementary School in Waterloo, Iowa use Black English, "code-switch" and acquire conventional English within the context of language arts and reading instruction in two upper elementary classrooms. The majority of my observations focused on reading and writing workshops, read aloud time and computer writing instruction. My fourth chapter describes the design and methodology for such a study.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

> "Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with purpose. It is a seeking that he who wishes to know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein."
>
> Zora Neale Hurston (1942)

Ethnography is an increasingly obvious research stance to understand the connections among language, culture and schooling. Ethnography means "learning from people" (Spradley, 1979, p. 3). Ethnography is a "study of what the world is like to people who have learned to see, hear, think and act in ways that are different" (Spradley, (1979, p. 60).

Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein describe ethnographers as "fieldworkers who live, observe, and describe the daily life, behaviors and language of a group of people for long periods of time" (1997, p. 3). The goal of an ethnographer is to describe the way of life of a particular group as a sort of insider. Ethnographers and ensuing ethnographies can help educators to imagine world and ways of living different from their own (Finders, 1992). Ethnographic ways of seeing in educational settings in particular can allow teachers to examine and deal with the assumptions and theories that impact the practical decisions they make on a daily basis in the classroom. Ethnographies "can provide the critical lens that allows us to uncover the assumptions that drive decisions about policies and practices in our curriculums and classrooms" (Finders, 1992, p. 60). Ethnographies show great potential as pedagogical tools. Ethnographic studies, in particular, have examined students in a variety of settings to ascertain how certain cultural groups fare in educational settings.

Ethnography and Ethnographic Studies

In *Ways with Words*, Shirley Brice Heath (1983) offers readers a perspective that views language, schooling and learning as critical links to how individuals function and succeed at home, in school and in the workplace. This seminal ethnographic study helped to establish the fields of anthropology and linguistics as relevant to educational practice. This study also exemplifies the important contributions social history can make to educational ethnography.

In the late 1960s, school desegregation in the South was legislated and in many instances, had to be enforced. The result was racial integration of schools, the workplace, and society at large, and this integration caused a massive reshuffling and redistricting of students and teachers.

During this turbulent time, Heath worked in an area of the South that outsiders and newcomers, but never residents, referred to as the Piedmont (foot of the mountain), Carolinas. She was an adjunct instructor in anthropology and linguistics at a local university with a reputation for an excellent teacher training program. Turning the lens of both disciplines on the untold drama of desegregation, Heath studied two communities, Roadville, a White community comprised of four generations of textile workers, and Trackton, a Black community whose older generations had worked in farming but whose younger members were also employed by the local mills.

Heath was interested in how the children of these communities learned language as they grew up in their respective communities. As an adjunct, she encountered both Black and White students who were community leaders, educators, businesspersons, ministers and mill personnel. Desegregation mandated that Blacks be integrated fully into society. It also meant many firsts. For the first time, White students and Black students would be in the same classes. Black teachers would have White students, and White teachers would instruct Black children. Black workers, male and female, would work side-by-side in the mills with White workers. Issues of communication and cultural background surfaced. Along with her students, Heath forged a partnership that included her students and herself as researchers.

For the residents of both Roadville and Trackton, communication was a concern. As the research progressed, the question emerged: What were the effects of preschool, home and community environments on the learning of those language structures and uses which were needed in the classroom and job settings?

Of particular concern were: 1) why do students and teachers often misunderstand each other? 2) why sometimes are questions asked that go unanswered? and, 3) why do habitual ways of talking and listening not always work in the newly created environment of desegregation? Ways of living--eating, speaking, modeling, learning and worshipping--were examined and the context of language acquisition and language learning habits were perceived as an integral part of the process of language learning.

The longitudinal study, which was conducted between 1969 and 1978 as Heath lived, worked and played with the children and their families in Roadville and Trackton, is an ethnography of those speech communities. Ethnographies of communication were created in an attempt to allow readers to follow Roadville and Trackton children from their homes and communities to school. Heath offers her readers a very unique and special piece of social history. This book is a record of the natural language flow of homes, communities and classroom life in two different communities.

The value of this work is the written record of children learning language as they grow up in their own community cultures. How children of two different cultures and language systems use language, and how teachers of these children learned to understand the others' language and use that knowledge and understanding in the school setting has implications for instruction that are of vital concern. Heath's work addresses three audiences: teachers at all levels who seek out new ways of learning, parents and community members concerned that today's child must learn more in a shorter amount of time, and scholars who are interested in the structures and usage of language.

Heath forged into new territory, laying the foundation for continued ethnographic studies about language and culture.

> Unless the boundaries between classroom and communities can be broken, and the flow of cultural patterns between them encouraged, the school will continue to legitimate and reproduce communities of townspeople who control and limit the potential progress of other communities and who themselves remain untouched by other values and ways of life (p. 369).

Jay MacLeod (1987) spent three years studying the lives of teenage boys who live in a housing project in a large urban city. In *Ain't No Making It* he focuses on two groups or "gangs" chronicling their lives and opportunities for upward social mobility. MacLeod addresses "achievement ideology" the concept that if you go to school, work hard and get good grades, you can graduate, go to college and obtain a good-paying job. MacLeod exposes how, for many students, school is an obstacle instead of a means of success. He offers a plan for schools, claiming that teachers, administrators and school systems need to abandon achievement ideologies and focus on changing the system so that equal opportunity is offered to all students.

Denny Taylor and Catherine Dorsey-Gaines (1988) collaborated on a research study which sought to develop ways to study literacy within a family context. The results of their six year study are both frightening and revealing. *Growing Up Literate* is revealing because the types of literacy experiences common to inner city families are detailed and discussed, exposing the fact that the inner city families they studied had very literate home environments. The book is frightening as it exposes the horrible fragmentation that many urban poor experience as they make the transition between home and school. Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines describe formal schooling as a process that "gradually disconnected lives" for many poor, urban children (p. 121). The two researchers offer portraits of this fragmentation that occurs when such children are forced to attend schools that disassociate what they value and learn at home, including language.

Toya Wyatt and Harry Seymour (1990) study the implications of code-switching behavior in Black-English speakers. They explore the "variability that occurs in the speech of Black English speakers as a result of changes in the social situation" (p. 17). Focusing on a five year old Black child, they analyze 1000 utterances made by the child over a two week period. Analysis reveals that both social situations and conversational partners as well as topic type elicit code-switching behavior.

Wyatt and Seymour conclude that "Black children vary their degree of Black English in accordance with social situations [and that] educators must examine a child's use of language in a variety of communicative situations, with different activities and different listeners" (pp. 17-18). They advocate additional research studies that examine language choices in different situations with different participants, providing yet another good reason for an ethnographic design.

David Schaafsma (1993) selects a nesting design that allows both a micro- and macro-ethnographic stance to illustrate how various teachers in a summer writing program perceived a common incident. Each teacher's story represents another layer or another "view" of the original incident.

Schaafsma tells his story by preserving and validating the voices of the other teachers as they tell their stories. His study focuses on the cultural perception and resulting conflict of "eating on the street," an expression that refers to consuming food and drink while out in public. The basis of the study is Schaafsma's examination of other teachers' conversations and perceptions about the same incident. Writes Schaafsma, "Stories embedded in these conversations, stories that the teachers tell, led me to other voices, other storytellers and theorists who speak to the particular issues that particular story raises for me" (1993, p. 49). Through Schaafsma's interpretation of each teacher's story, readers not only come to understand the differing perspectives regarding "eating on the street," but also come to know the unique personal histories of each teacher, their connections to the students and the school that housed the summer writing program, the community in which the students' homes and the school is located and the history of race relations in the city of Detroit, Michigan. Schaafsma's study is a wonderful example of a researcher assuming both a micro- and macro-ethnographic stance, and it is exemplary for conveying the layers of the nesting design, what Schaafsma terms a "multiplicity of voices" (1993, p. 204).

Schaafsma (1993) seeks to understand how learners learn and how teachers teach in urban centers. His research takes place in the Cass Corridor section of inner-city Detroit where he deals with urban problems and urban realities, unsettling the boundaries of thought and practice to which he had become accustomed to as an educator. His questions go to the heart of the language and cultural diversity issue. How do learners learn and teachers teach in the neighborhoods of urban America? What is the "finer perspective" that urban educators need? Is collaborative teaching the "right" environment for African American children from urban areas? And, How do values shape instruction, especially instruction of African American children? Together with thirty children and seven teachers, Schaafsma explores the need for social and ethical change in American education.

Whitmore and Crowell (1994) also utilize a nesting design in their study of the Sunshine Room. Their study examines the teacher as mediator, the bilingual environment of the classroom and the literacy of children. Each different and unique child who informs their study is described in vivid detail, allowing readers to see the rich and literate lives of the children in these families. The resulting description conveys the sociocultural context and reality in which this classroom exists, the context being the layers of the nest.

Research Design

Ethnographic research, such as those studies just reviewed, provides a "naturalistic, observational, descriptive, contextual, open-ended and in-depth approach to doing research" (Wilcox, 1982, p. 462). No child, setting or particular teacher can be generalized to other similar settings.

The ultimate and real-life purpose of research studies of schools, classrooms, teachers and students is to make it possible to change things for the better (Spindler, 1982). Within the realm of educational research, qualitative research, including ethnographic studies, can play a significant role. Ethnographic studies are often utilized to answer "how" and "why" questions. For instance: How do individuals operate in relationship to others? or Why does a particular strategy work in a certain context?, or perhaps, How can one learn from a set of variables in a given situation? Ethnographic studies allow researchers such as myself to focus on a setting and to discover what is happening in that particular context. Such research is qualitative and systematic (Erickson, 1987).

Ethnographic studies are particularly suited to unique situations. This type of research examines specifics in a particular context. However, understanding the specifics of language use in this setting may suggest a more general explanation for the role of Black English in other classroom and school settings.

I selected ethnographic research as it forces researchers like myself to situate data in a sociocultural, historical and political context. Like Heath, (1983), MacLeod (1987), Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988), Wyatt and Seymour (1990), Schaafsma (1993), and Whitmore & Crowell (1994), I wanted to use research tools that explored context and allowed me to ask "how" and "why" questions. This study is designed to facilitate a descriptive, ethnographic examination of two fourth-fifth grade combination classrooms. I perceived Carver Elementary as a rich site for data collection, and I assumed that both Black English and standard English would be used in a nonconstrained way. I employed both techniques and methods of ethnographic research rooted in the traditions of education and anthropology, mainly: participant observation, while recording field notes, audiotaping of naturally occurring language and subsequent transcription of tapes, and selected interviewing. Findings from the study inform not only myself, the researcher, but also the two teachers who participate, the school community and the school district. The study adds to the body of knowledge about language and literacy presented in chapters I, II and III as well as to the national debate about the role of Black English in schools.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to investigate how Black English-speaking children use language in a particular context and how their teachers both acknowledge their primary discourse and facilitate acquisition of standard English. The ethnographic techniques of participant observation, audio taping and semistructured and structured interviewing were used to generate and collect data.

Participant Observation

Systematic participant observation and the subsequent recording of field notes was the primary technique I employed to collect data for this study. Beginning February 1, 1997, and continuing for sixteen weeks until June 1, 1997, I spent two hours each week in each teacher's respective room. Four months represents roughly one half of an academic year. I selected this time frame for several reason: by the midway mark of the school year, both teachers would have acquired substantial knowledge of their students' strengths and limitations, teachers would have estimated how students were performing, individually and against class averages, and routines involving classroom practice would have been firmly established. I selected the time span for observations at two hours weekly in each room as a way to observe language use systematically, at regular intervals, over the duration of the study.

I was a moderate to active participant, not a full participant (Spradley, 1980). A moderate to active position strikes a balance between being an insider and an outsider, between participator and observer. I intended my role to be moderate to active so that I could concentrate on the recording of descriptive details in the form of field notes. As more of an observer, I attended to my observations of language arts instruction, activities and language interactions as well as note-taking procedures. Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988) urge those doing ethnographic research to "write it down...Whatever you observe, write it down" (p. 215). The writing down of what I observed was one mode of data collection.

A more limited participant role helped me avoid disrupting the natural flow of classroom activities, and helped to ensure that I did not unduly influence or possibly intimidate either teacher, avoiding situations where I might appear to "evaluate" or "consult" (Whitmore & Crowell, 1994). However, my position was somewhat fluid and flexible within the realm of a moderate to active participant.

Audiotaped Recordings

To increase the accuracy of my observations, I audiotaped specific instances of classroom discourse during sessions that I observed. I looked for instances where students and teachers code-switched and instances where the teachers mediated students' code-switching. Many of these instances occurred spontaneously during the course of instruction in language arts, reading and computer class. I would observe code-switching or a particular context in which something was occurring and make the decision to record.

Systematic audio-taping provided a second set of data to answer my questions about code-switching and how teachers facilitate the acquisition of standard English. I transcribed tapes. A systematic coding system for all taped observations and interviews was used which registered each tape with date, time, class observed, context and type of instruction noted.

Semistructured and Structured Interviews

Through interviews, I generated a third set of data that also represents the nesting layers of the design. Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein (1997) suggest that "you need your informants' actual words to support your findings" (p. 203). Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of my informants and to maintain their anonymity.

I formally interviewed Jackie Parker, an activist in Waterloo's Black community, Belinda Jackson, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources for the Waterloo schools and former principal of Carver Elementary, and Vanessa Carson Hart, Principal at Carver as this study was conducted. Belinda Jackson was interviewed within the first three weeks of the study, Vanessa Carson Hart was interviewed near the conclusion of the study and Jackie Parker was interviewed after classroom data was collected. These individuals helped me to understand the school district and community layers of my design and provided important knowledge about the histories of the school district and the community in terms of Black English and standard English usage. I included Belinda Jackson and Vanessa Carson Hart as informants because of their unique positions within the school district. Not only were Belinda and Vanessa born in Waterloo, attended and graduated from Waterloo's public schools, but both have been with the district for a considerable amount of time and have served as the principal at Carver. Jackson is currently a central administrator for the Waterloo schools, and in her many capacities, she adds a rich layer of understanding to my study. Carson Hart's perceptions on Carver, the Waterloo Community School District and the community of Waterloo were sought as a means of further enriching the nesting design of this study. Her views corroborated Jackson's and Parker's views, adding another deeper and richer layer to the study. I chose to interview Jackie Parker because he enjoys a very unique status in the Waterloo community.

Belinda Jackson, Vanessa Carson Hart and Jackie Parker, all community informants, have what I term a "pulse" on the Black community in Waterloo. They are committed members of this community, and all three individuals have a history with both the Black community and the Waterloo community at large.

Each teacher was formally interviewed once during the sixth week of the study when parent-teacher conferences were held. The formal interviews were designed to be open-ended and conversational and were audiotaped, transcribed and coded.

Informal interviews of the two teachers occurred before and after observation periods, during breaks, at lunch and at recess. I audiotaped these informal interviews whenever possible as well as recorded them in my field notes.

Students were also interviewed formally and informally. I selected seven target children from each class within the first eight weeks of the study. These students were African American, and I observed them code-switching. By weeks ten and eleven, I culled two students from each class from this pool of fourteen students to consider as focal students. These students demonstrated the language and learning theories described in chapter II, were strong examples of Black English speakers and demonstrated an ability to code-switch depending on the context of situations. Both teachers provided input into the final selection of focal students. Together the three of us discussed each target student and after considering such factors as attendance and the overall effects of the extra attention of being a focal student, we decided on two students from each room. I included a gender mix of students and attempted the inclusion of students who were born in Mississippi as well as Waterloo-born students. The following two tables, 6 and 7, detail those two groups of students. Tables 8 and 9 exhibit formal interviews.

The formal student interviews which were taped and transcribed, took place during the last six weeks of the study. Informal interviews with the children also took place, and these were recorded in the form of field notes.

Table 6. Target Students

African American	males &	females	born Mississippi	born Iowa
DF's room	4	3	1	6
TH's room	3	4	0	7

Table 7. Focal Students

DF's class	TH's class
African American male Mississippi born	African American female Iowa born
African American male Iowa born	African American female Iowa born

Triangulation, the process of verifying, validating and disconfirming, (Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein, 1997; Denzin, 1989) took place from three different sources of data: field notes generated from participant observation, audiotaped transcriptions, and formal and semistructured interviews. As a way to confirm data, I had both teachers as well as Belinda Jackson, Jackie Parker and Vanessa Carson Hart respond to my field notes with their own perspectives. Participant

Table 8. Formal Interview Schedule

week 3	(February, 1997)	Belinda Jackson
week 6	(March 1997)	DF & TH
week 8	(March 1997)	target students
week 10	(April 1997)	focal students
week 13	(May 1997)	Vanessa Carson Hart
	(July 1997)	Jackie Parker

Table 9. Data Sources and Collection Schedule

DATE COLLECTED	DATA SOURCE(S)	ARTIFACT(S)
February 1997	Fieldnotes: p/ob (4 hours per week during language instruction, rdg & wrtg. workshops & comp lab time).	classroom demographics school mission poster classroom maps district goal statement student writing samples (target students)
	Audiotaped class discussions and student discussions Belinda Jackson interview	
March 1997	Fieldnotes: p/ob (4 hours per week during language instruction, rdg. & wrtg. workshops	student writing samples (target students)

Table 9, cont.

DATE COLLECTED	DATA SOURCE(S)	ARTIFACT(S)
	& comp lab time). Audio taped classroom talk teacher interviews target student interviews	
April 1997	Fieldnotes: p/ob (4 hours per week during language instruction, rdg. & wrtg. workshops & comp lab time). Audiotaped classroom talk focal student interviews	student writing samples (focal students)
May 1997	Fieldnotes: p/ob (4 hours per week during language instruction, rdg. & wrtg. workshops & computer lab time). Audiotaped classroom talk Vanessa Carson Hart interview	student writing samples (focal students) Carver staff bulletin school poster District goals/objectives school basics hall poster
June 1997	Fieldnotes: p/ob teacher input on focal students	
July 1997	Jackie Parker interview	

response to my observations provided a vehicle for sounding ideas and exchanging thoughts on sensitive subjects (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). This greatly informed all aspects of this study.

Data Analysis

James Peacock (1986) defines two aspects of ethnographic research: data collection and interpretation. Once data has been generated and collected, it has to be analyzed. Such interpretation is filtered through a researcher's own lens or frame of reference. "What we see also depends on how we look - how we open ourselves up to the acts of seeing" (Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein, 1997, p. 97). I collected what I observed. Decisions I made about what to observe and consequently record were influenced by what I already knew and believed. Using the lens of my own theory allows me to use myself as a tool to filter data, to become part of the data.

Use of ethnographic and other qualitative research methodology involves in-depth interpretation and analysis. The analysis of the data generated through this study was conducted according to established anthropological traditions. Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines advocate that ethnographic researchers "move constantly between data collection and data analysis" (1988, p. 221).

"Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 157). The task of data analysis involves interpreting and making sense out of material collected for a research study. As a first-time researcher, the task seemed enormous. I fluctuated between thinking I did not "get anything" good in terms of data and being overwhelmed by the monumental task of sifting through my data, coding it, interpreting it and arranging it.

For the most part, I first collected data and then conducted my formal analysis, however I made certain decisions about my study while in the field. Early on, I felt the need to decide on a focus for my study. I began with the two fourth-fifth combination classrooms. From each classroom, I interviewed seven to eight target students. I selected them based on characteristics of Black-English speakers previously described in this study. From this potential pool of student subjects, I further narrowed my focus to just two focal students in each class. That decision actually allowed me to look at the four students I had selected as a sample of this entire fourth-fifth grade population. I ended up focusing on one student in particular, Marcus, who fascinated me with his quick verbal nature and his acute ability to code-switch. In addition, he was able to articulate his need to code-switch and to discuss, in depth, the reasons why he changes his speech. Marcus's unique background, his family's continued kinship ties to communities in Mississippi and his personal abilities and opinions about language differences intrigued me. Marcus emerged as an example of a student who successfully negotiates the demands of differing speech communities.

I transcribed field notes within 48 hours of observing on-site; it was quite natural to reflect on notes as I typed them using a two column format. I often found myself transcribing and analyzing simultaneously. I took the time to record important insights that came to me during data collection. Keeping a researcher's journal allowed to be doubly reflective as I used it to keep track of what was working in terms of data collection, what was unmanageable, and what I wanted to do next.

While collecting data, I also tried out themes and ideas on subjects. For example, if I noticed a particular behavior in a student, I'd mention it to Terri or Delores. In this way, I would get great feedback on my observations, and the chance to record additional richer data. This kind of thinking also led me to actually ask Marcus and the other focal students about if and why they changed their language. I ended up with a truly wonderful account of language difference through Marcus's lens.

Once I had analyzed and interpreted interview transcripts and decided how I wanted to weave my subject's voices into my analysis, I gave copies of pertinent chapters to each key informant. I asked them to read and respond to what I had written. At this point, I also asked and received permission to use their real names.

Once I had decided to winnow down my focus, I spent the final month of my study following Marcus around, to the playground, in line between classes, in the lunchroom, in the computer lab. I also positioned myself by him during classroom observations.

On a more personal note, my biggest struggle emerged when I began to speculate on what it was I was seeing, both during data collection and during analysis after data collection. I was cautious, afraid even to formulate my own opinions. I kept asking myself, who am I to say this, to postulate this, to declare this? I even felt a bit guilty, falling into the trap in which Bogdan and Biklen describe new researchers. Like many novice researchers, I had "been taught not to say anything until they are sure it is true" (1998, p. 169). I also caught myself delaying analysis because I had not completed transcription. I mistakenly thought that I could not analyze because all my "evidence" or data was not "ready."

I conducted repeated sweeps through my data, reading and rereading fieldnotes, transcribed observations and interview write-ups. I began to see certain words, phrases, patterns of predictable behavior and events repeat themselves. In this way they stood out as significant. Key general categories emerged from the data. I called these individual classroom culture, language choice decisions and culturally responsive pedagogy. I worked with my data with a pad of paper beside me so I could easily jot down possible sub-codes. This led me to also sketch possible relationships I noticed between data.

By searching through my data for regularities and patterns, I was able to write down words and phrases that represented topics and patterns. More specific categories emerged, and I was able to tally the number of occurrences within each category to gain an idea of the number of occurrences within each category. Once all data was coded, I began the task of sorting it. I did this by hand, placing similarly coded passages in labeled folders. Like Bogdan and Biklen, I called this my cut-up-and-put-in-folders-phase of analysis (1998, p. 186). As I sorted material, the following codes emerged (see Table 10).

Physically sorting the material gave me the opportunity to think profoundly about my data. I was able to order and reorder files so as to group similar kinds of coded materials together.

Transcription Issues

Transcription issues were a special concern to me. Initially, I identified student and teacher use of Black

Table 10. Codes Used in This Study

- I. Inventing Classroom Culture
  - A. Belief System
  - B. Environment
  - C. Using Language to Manage & Control Behavior
  - D. Reducing Cultural Mismatch in the Classroom
  - E. Knowledge of Teaching Reading & Writing
  - F. Being Direct
- II. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
  - A. Acknowledging Verbal Nature
  - B. Using Antiphonal Response
  - C. Code-switching
  - D. Demonstrations
  - E. Accepting Approximations
  - F. Acceptance Perspective

English. I was uncomfortable with representing Black English "on the page." It was not only a transcription issue for me, but an ethical issue, as well. I am not a linguist or a linguistic specialist. I do not pretend to be one. And, I am not an anthropologist. Even though I borrowed theory and methodology from each discipline, I do not claim to be an expert at either. I was sensitive to the fact that some representations of language differences "on the page" imply a judgment. For instance, some view omissions marked by apostrophes as condescending and suggesting that Black English on the page is lacking compared to standard English.

In chapters I, II, and III, Black English "on the page" has a notably different representation at the phonological, grammatical and syntax levels than standard English. For instance, disappearing glottal stops and dropped final consonants are represented by an apostrophe and certain words like the and that can be represented as da and dat. Spoken language does not map exactly to written language, and not all language differences and dialect differences are represented differently than standard English "on the page." Representing Black English could have easily emerged as a power issue. I did not want to be racist in my representation, aware that other language differences are not represented differently in print. Therefore, I was cautious about how I did represent Black English so as not to appear to pontificate or to be condescending. On the other hand, I was aware that I needed to represent differences between Black and standard English.

In the end, I referred to selected individuals' representation of Black English on the page (Dillard, 1972; Hughes, 1942, 1969; Hurston, 1935; Labov, 1972; Walker, 1982; Wyatt, 1995) using their representations as models. Using an identification system developed primarily from Wyatt's (1995) work specifically for the purposes of this study, I also considered the research and writings of Labov (1972), Dillard (1972), and the writings of Hurston (1935), Hughes (1942; 1969) and Walker (1982). In an attempt to define the Black English spoken in Waterloo, Iowa, I decided on the following sixteen selected features. Table 11 details the selected features of Black English I chose to identify Black English spoken in Waterloo, Iowa.

Table 11. Sixteen Selected Features of Black English Used in This Study

Phonological	example standard English	example Black English
tendency to reduce or simplify final consonant clusters; final consonant deleted	past	pas'
weakened final consonants disappearing into glottal stops	dad	dat
dropped final l or r	floor	flo'
dropped final g in words ending in ing	having	havin'
initial th sound voiced as d	this	dis
deletion of initial unstressed syllables	acceptance	'cepptance
production of f for th	both	bof
intonational variation	Detroit	Detroit
absent past tense marked	looked	look
absent plural s marker	ten cents	ten cent'
absent possessive s marker	Pat's woman	Pat woman
irregular verb usage	I went there	I had went there
zero copula	She is here	She here

Table 11, cont.

Grammatical	example standard English	example Black English
subject-verb agreement	They were good	They was good
irregular, habitual use of be	She is going	She be goin'
(long term duration)	I have known her	I been knowin' her
use of ain't for hasn't, isn't, haven't, and don't	Life for me hasn't been easy	Life fo' me ain't been easy

I then verified and corrected transcriptions as needed as I listened to and reviewed audio tapes. This was tricky given the language diversity issues. Moreover, I can only re-emphasize how very cautious and sensitive I was about representing Black English "on the page."

Through this study, my goal was to examine classroom practice and use practice to inform and build theory. I hope to acknowledge the multiple perspectives of the participants in this study and my own interpretive frame. It was equally important to me to preserve the voices and views of those who participated in my study and to use my own "lens" to interpret and analyze data collected. "Theory is generated from data inductively while at the same time this same data is winnowed through the researcher's 'culturally learned frames of interpretation' " (Erickson, 1986, p. 140).

Participants

Both teachers were key informants in this study as were Jackie Parker, community activist and two administrators, Belinda Jackson and Vanessa Carson Hart. The four focal students were also very important, but Marcus, one focal student emerged as extremely important.

The Classroom Teachers

Two educators served as the key participant-informants for this study. Delores Fox is African American, single, has two children and has taught for fifteen years. She is originally from Burlington, Iowa, one of Iowa's five large, urban centers, and she attended Central College, a small, private liberal arts school in the southern Iowa town of Pella. Delores earned her B.A. degree in elementary education and early childhood in 1980. She taught at two other Waterloo elementary schools prior to working at Carver. Initially she taught kindergarten at Carver, then switched to third grade as enrollments dropped, eventually teaching fourth grade until her current combination assignment. Delores earned her M.A. degree in middle grades math the summer of 1996.

Terri Hall is White, has one child, is married and has taught at Carver for eight years. Terri is originally from

Central Heights, Iowa, home to the North Central University (NCU) and adjacent to Waterloo. She attended the NCU, one of the state's three Regents' institutions, and graduated with her B.A. degree in elementary education with an emphasis in early childhood in 1986. Prior to working at Carver, she worked at a child development center and was a substitute teacher within the Waterloo district. She earned her M.A. degree the summer of 1998.

Delores resides in Waterloo and lives with her two adolescent daughters on the east side. Terri resides in nearby Central Heights with her infant daughter and husband. Both women not only majored in elementary education, with emphasis in early childhood education, but they also share a very similar educational philosophy. In my eyes, they are true child advocates; the best interest of the child is paramount in their practice.

The Students

The students are fourth and fifth graders assigned to combination classrooms. There are 25 students in each class. Table 12 represents the demographics of each teacher's students.

Situatedness

I find myself in an interesting and curious position. I feel like I am already more than a participant-observer,

Table 12. Classroom Demographics

TH's room

	boys	girls
African American	9	8
White	3	3
Puerto Rican	1	0
Biracial*	0	1

DF's room

	boys	girls
African American	9	10
White	2	2
Biracial*	1	1

* African American and European American

having been intricately and intimately involved in the daily lives of what and whom I wish to study. I AM a part of what I study. Not only have I taught successfully for eleven years in the Waterloo School District, I also taught at Carver. Yet, I feel like I can no longer just "step in and step out" as Hortense Powdermaker suggests (1966).

Like Powdermaker, Lila Abu-Lughod (1991) describes her unique cultural status by juxtaposing it to anthropology's assumption that there is a fundamental difference between self and other. She comments on feminist anthropologists whose practice attempts to unsettle the boundaries between self and other and in her work, she has attempted to explore the boundaries of self. I often feel, like Abu-Lughod, as if I am between two worlds, in my case, two academic worlds, a teacher and a researcher, and two cultural worlds, Black and White America. I can't really claim one world over the other.

My own definition of where I situate myself is that of "crossover status," alluding to the derogatory term "crossover" when a person of one race dates, socializes, cohabits with or marries a person of another race. Not only have I crossed over from teacher to researcher, from school setting to University setting, but as one half of a biracial couple, I also crossed over a racial/ethnic barrier.

Crossing over has given me a very different perspective. My "eyes" and "ears" are tuned differently. "All ethnographies are situated" writes Abu-Lughod (1990, p. 11). My study is situated within a Black community elementary school, in two classrooms populated predominantly with African American children. I am a White woman, an educator, who is crossing over into the academic world of educational research.

As I study a language and culture outside my own culture, I need to remind myself of my positions, my situatedness and realize how that affects my observations, interpretations and analysis. Self-scrutiny was essential to my study. Unlike many ethnographers, I did not have an official trope of arrival to an exotic field site. Also, my "otherness" may influence the honesty of my informants and participants.

Ethnographers are often seen as not only outsiders, but as authorities to the subjects they study. This ethnographic authority can exacerbate "otherness" by setting up a hierarchy between researcher and researched. Feminist ethnographers, Frances Mascia-Lees, Patricia Sharpe and Colleen Cohen, (1989) caution ethnographers about portraying those we study with unchallenged authority. The voices of those we study must be heard and be just as valid as much as those doing the studying. Informants' perspectives must be as valid as the ethnographer's.

As a White teacher-researcher conducting a qualitative study of Black English, I too, want the voices of those I study to be heard as much as my own voice. Many of the voices in my study are typically silenced: teachers, women, Black-English speakers, minority group members, and students. Like Mascia-Lees, Sharpe and Cohen, (1989) I want to recognize difference but not in terms of a hierarchy. And, like Schaafsma, (1993) I want a multiplicity of voices to be heard and recognized. Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein write:

> The fieldwriter has a double responsibility. You must represent your own perspective at the same time you are representing your informants' perspectives of the field

> site. And through reflection, you must discuss your role as constructor of this doubled version of reality (1997, p. 163).

It is a heavy responsibility. But I willingly assumed the burden of the ethics of representation.

Ethical Concerns

Anthropology, the study of culture, assumes a fundamental difference between “self” and “other.” Within anthropological research, the term “other” refers to the tendency to exploit informants and the participants of anthropological research studies. Will I "other" the participants of my study, exploiting them, their language, families and lives? And, will my actual research and subsequent written dissertation reduce my informants and participants to "others?" Will I alienate myself from teaching colleagues because I am working on an advanced degree which will separate me from the field in which I research, causing me to be "othered" as well? Will it be worth it in the end?

These were some of my questions/assumptions, some of the attitude and feelings I had based on my own background experiences as I approached and subsequently conducted this study. I know that focusing on individuals encourages familiarity, not distance and studying this way helps me personally to break down "otherness."

Power Positions

Positioning is a vital concern to all ethnographic researchers. First of all, I wondered and actually expected that I would be viewed as the "more educated teacher" who left the classroom to pursue an advanced degree. This situates me outside of the school world I am interested in studying. Although I am very familiar with the Carver staff and students, I am no longer part of the Carver "family." I left Carver to study full time at the University, a move that places me outside of the day-to-day classroom concerns at Carver. Secondly, I taught with both women in the position of literacy specialist. It was my job to work with students referred by both teachers. They frequently came to me for suggestions about teaching, especially in the area of language arts and reading instruction. I regularly recommended curriculum, books and strategies to them.

I was also concerned about how a White, educated female teacher was viewed by the students selected as focal students. Would I been viewed as someone who thought she was an expert on Black culture and Black English? What was the reaction of the families of focal students toward the study? As a researcher, I questioned how to balance the view that my lens affords me. I tried to become as knowledgeable as possible about Black English before attempting the study. As Wyatt (1995) suggests I needed to be as knowledgeable as possible about Black English as a language system before I could try to attempt to effect any change.

Being knowledgeable about an issue and being an expert about a culture are two separate things. I became knowledgeable about Black culture and Black English. I am expert at neither.

Finally, I had a "burning" question that continues to alternately haunt and guide me. Can I do these students, these teachers, this building justice by placing them at the center of a research study?

Researcher's Role

In this study, my role as a participant-observer is truly unique. I was assigned to Carver as a Title I teacher during the 1994-95 and the 1995-96 school years. I taught on the same floor as both Delores and Terri during that time, and served many of their students as my Title I clients. We all were members of the same instructional team. Located on Carver's third floor, we referred to ourselves as the "Penthouse Team". In addition, Delores was my son's fourth-grade teacher, and Terri was his fifth-grade teacher. It was Delores who first successfully encouraged my very reticent son, Adam, to share his writing and reading in workshops during fourth grade, and it was Terri who was the first adult outside of family to challenge my son's sense of social responsibility, justice and equality as he struggled with those issues as a fifth grader. My experiences with them as their colleague and as a parent have formed my perspective of them as "model" educators. We not only associated professionally as colleagues prior to my employment at Carver, but we all played softball in a local women's league.

My decision to gather research data at Carver was deliberate. Having worked at the school for two years, gaining entry was a simple process for me. My prior relationship with both teachers allows me a familiarity few researchers enjoy at the onset of a study. With both Delores and Terri having also taught my son, I was very impressed with their child advocacy beliefs. Both teachers view children as individuals and judge children according to their own potentials. I also perceive both teachers as excellent managers of student behavior. Lastly, I chose these two teachers at Carver because I knew, firsthand, that they possess awareness about African American culture and about Black English. I hold both educators in high esteem; they are intelligent women who are easily able to articulate their beliefs. I feel a strong sense of kinship with both of these teachers, not just because we had taught together and both women had taught my son, but because I genuinely admire them as professional educators. We have a unique relationship. Asking them to be participants in my research study added another layer to the rich existing relationship we enjoy.

Summary of Study

This study is crafted to understand, through my personal ethnographic lens, in the specific context of two fourth-fifth grade combination classrooms, how and why two teachers validate and dignify Black English, demonstrate and encourage diglossia and facilitate the acquisition of standard English within their classrooms. Specifically, I documented how Black English-speaking African American children in these two classrooms at Carver Elementary in Waterloo, Iowa, use language.

In chapter V, I present data about the school system and Carver Elementary School through my own eyes and the eyes of two of its administrators, both members of Waterloo's Black community and key informants in this study. Their perceptions add another vital layer to the nest.

CHAPTER V

SCHOOL IN A PLACE CALLED WATERLOO:
PEDAGOGICAL LAYERS OF THE NEST

> "Education must enable one to sift and weigh the evidence,
> to discern the true from the false,
> the real from the unreal,
> and the facts from the fiction."
>
> Martin Luther King, Jr. (1983, p. 41)

In this chapter, I present data that describe additional layers of the nest, specifically the Waterloo Community School District and Carver Elementary School. Embedded within the historical and political arena of American public education, the Waterloo school district holds a unique position in the state of Iowa, yet Waterloo is also somewhat representative of other large urban Midwest cities that are home to significant numbers of Black students. As described in chapter I, Waterloo has the distinction of having the largest concentration of African Americans of any of Iowa's five large urban centers. Carver is also unique within the Waterloo system as it is an elementary building that boasts a student population that is roughly 73% African American in a system whose African American population is approximately 29%.

An historical view of the district further contextualizes both the district itself in relationship to historical events in Waterloo history and Carver School as an entity within the district system. Through the eyes of two key informants, both Waterloo Community School district administrators, my description of the Waterloo Community School District includes perspectives on how the Black student population is accommodated and served by the district. The voices of these key informants elicit a portrait of Carver Elementary as a unique and distinct school within the Waterloo district.

An Historical Overview

The Waterloo Community School District claims a humble beginning. According to Barbara Beving Long (1986), an amateur local historian, the district began in 1853 as a 16 by 22 foot log cabin located on west side of the prairie town. The first east side school was built in 1854. Prior to 1858, schools within the village of Waterloo, then called Prairie Rapids Crossing, operated as a single school district. For the next seventy-six years, between 1866 and 1942, two separate school systems functioned within the city's limits. On the west side of town, what was called the Waterloo School District operated independently, and the east side was home to the Independent District of East Waterloo.

By 1928, ten schools existed on the east side of Waterloo and nine schools were located on the west side. East High School, which historically has served the majority of children from Waterloo's Black community was established in 1919. In 1922, West High School (the current West Middle School) was built. In 1955, the new West High School, housed at its current site, was completed. The last major change to the district occurred in 1964 when a merger incorporated two outlying school districts into the Waterloo Community Schools (Long, 1986). Currently, the district operates twenty-one schools: fourteen K-5 elementary buildings, four middle schools containing grades 6-8, and three high schools, one alternative and the other two traditional (Waterloo Community Schools Alumni Directory, 1992).

Much has transpired within the Waterloo community in the 145 years that schools have existed. The schools have expanded in response to population demands from the community as several waves of new arrivals have impacted the city's population.

Immigrant Populations Shape Waterloo Community

White northern Europeans began arriving in the Waterloo area between 1840 and 1890. Built on lands ceded from the local Fox and Sac tribes, German, Norwegian, Dutch and Danish immigrants as well as Anglo-European settlers from the eastern United States settled in Waterloo. By 1850

Waterloo's total population was 135 residents. "Germans settled in the south of Black Hawk County, the French in the east, the Irish and Scots to the northeast, and the Norwegians and Danes to the west" (O'Donoghue, 1998, p. I 1). "Germans and Austrians had been coming to Waterloo since the mid 1870s and were, by far, the largest foreign group" (Corwin & Hoy, 1994). In the late 1800s Waterloo experienced an influx of eastern European immigrants, including Croatians, who came to Waterloo in search of employment on the Illinois Central Railroad. These early Slavic immigrants, some of whom were my relatives, shared box car quarters with African Americans who had begun to migrate to Waterloo from the South (Kinney, 1998).

In 1875, census figures indicated that Black Hawk County's population was 23,000 White citizens and 28 African American citizens. Factories and industries related to agriculture have always figured prominently in Waterloo history. Job opportunities with industry have been a magnet for many immigrant groups. Industrialization brought lasting changes in the composition of Waterloo population. As chronicled in chapter II, the great migration of African Americans from the delta of Mississippi to East Waterloo began in the first decade of the 1900s, establishing Waterloo's seventy-five year old Black community (O'Donoghue, 1998).

A small group of Russian and Polish Jews came to Waterloo about 1900. Greek immigrants established themselves about the same time.

The second wave of African Americans from the South started arriving in Waterloo in the 1940s. By 1940 over 1,500 African Americans called Waterloo home (Long, 1986; O'Donoghue, 1998).

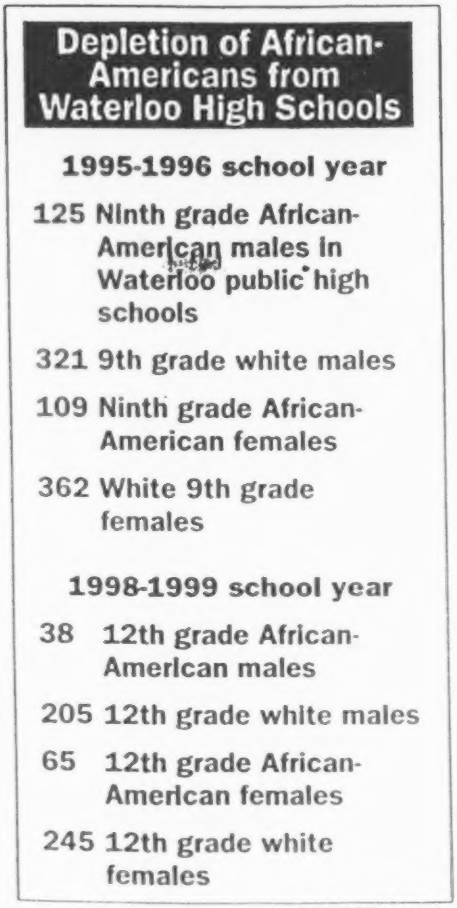
In the early 1990s, the building and operation of an Iowa Beef Processors (IBP) plant in Waterloo attracted a wave of Mexican-American workers. Most recently, the terrible civil war in the Balkans has resulted in the current wave of immigrants, Bosnian war refugees, who are being relocated in Waterloo and who provide large numbers of the non-English speaking workforce for IBP (Kinney, 1998; O'Donoghue, 1998).

Whereas the very first school in Waterloo served seventeen families of White European descent, recent demographic data from the district lists an entire enrollment of 10,448. 3,053 or 29.2% students are African American (*Quality of Education Task Force*, 1997). The district has seen a steady increase of African American students in recent years: 1) In 1993-94, 26.2% of the children enrolled in Waterloo schools were African American, 2) In 1994-95, that figure rose to 27.4%, 3) the number climbed to 28% in 1995-96, and 4) in the 1996-97 school year, the number of African American students in Waterloo schools rose to 29.2%. In that four year span, the average yearly increase of African

American students was roughly 3% (*Quality of Education Task Force*, 1997).

Despite the fact that nearly one third of the district's students are African American, success rates for this population are dismal. In Waterloo in 1998, only 63% of African American twelfth graders graduated (O'Donoghue, January 18, 1998). In the academic years 1998-1999, 1997-1998, 1996-1997, and 1995-1996, "33 percent of Waterloo public high school students dropped out" (Nick & Golden, 1999, p. A-1). For the past four years, Waterloo's dropout rate has been six points above the national average. Most alarming is that only thirty eight Black males graduated from Waterloo public high schools in 1998 (Golden, 1999). Figure 5 illustrates the dropout rates for Black and White students in a four year period. Of the 234 African American students enrolled in ninth grade in 1996, only 103 or 44% graduated in 1998. In terms of gender, 125 African American males were enrolled in ninth grade in 1996 but only 38 or 30% graduated; 109 African American females entered as ninth graders and in 1998, 65 or 59% graduated (Golden, 1999).

In comparison, statistics from Oakland, California were shared in chapter I and reveal that of the 51,000 students enrolled in Oakland schools, 53% were African American and only 20% of all African American students graduate (see page 36).



Depletion of African-Americans from Waterloo High Schools

1995-1996 school year

125	Ninth grade African-American males in Waterloo public high schools
321	9th grade white males
109	Ninth grade African-American females
362	White 9th grade females

1998-1999 school year

38	12th grade African-American males
205	12th grade white males
65	12th grade African-American females
245	12th grade white females

COURIER graphic

Figure 5. Enrollment and Dropout Rates for African Americans between 1996 and 1998

Districtwide suspensions and expulsions also paint a bleak picture of the success rate of Black children enrolled in Waterloo schools. During the 1996-97 school year, 347 children were suspended from elementary schools, and African Americans accounted for 193 or 55% of those suspensions. In the middle school, 577 were suspended with 283 or 49% being African American. Of the 258 high schools students suspended during that same year, 70% or 181 were African American (*Waterloo Community School Annual Report*, 1997).

Following national trends, special education placement is also disproportionate with an over-representation of Black males being labeled and served. Standardized test scores, another indicator of success, illustrate that Black students enrolled in Waterloo schools do not achieve at the same rate as their White counterparts.

District officials are obviously aware of concerns regarding the achievement and success of the district's Black students. Data such as test scores as measures of achievement supports those concerns as valid as do the thoughts and feelings of African American parents who have repeatedly approached various Boards of Education with concerns regarding their African American children. Of particular concern to many Black parents are the low numbers of Black teachers employed by the district. In the late 1960s, African American parents and other concerns citizens conducted a sit-in at the district's administration building to protest the inadequate number of Black teachers within the district. Testimony to the recognition that the needs of African American students are not being met can be found in District Goal #3 (See Appendix E). It states that the district will strive to "Eliminate ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status as predictors of a student's academic achievement, graduation rate, testing data, discipline referrals, participation in extracurricular activities or parent involvement in the school" (*Board of Directors Report*, 1996).

Carver Elementary: A School in a Place Called Waterloo

Quite naturally, the Board of Education for the Waterloo Schools should be concerned with the district as a whole. It is their job to consider the "big picture." However, my focus is on just one school within the district system.

Carver Elementary in Waterloo is like Camelot. I often think of it as an oasis for African American children. A safe place to learn and grow. A nurturing place. It is a sometimes magical place, largely because of the teachers who teach there and the administrators who assist those teachers. The layers of the nesting design provide a contextualized view of the school itself and the two classrooms at Carver chosen as the site for this study.

Carver Elementary is located on the north end of Waterloo often called the East Side and home to the majority of Waterloo's Black community. Waterloo can be described as a medium-sized, urban center located within an agrarian state in the Midwest.

Carver Elementary was built in 1918. Like numerous other buildings in urban districts in Iowa and elsewhere in the United States, an inadequate amount of money and attention has been paid to the infrastructure of Carver Elementary. The three story brick building houses approximately 275 students in grades kindergarten through five.

Carver sits on an entire city block. The front of the building faces East Arlington Street and a side view of several neighborhood homes. From the exterior, Carver can appear to be foreboding. The bricks are aged to a dark brown color. Modifications to the building such as steel-framed windows and an addition built onto the back of the building indicate that some attention has been paid to the building during the course of its existence.

Lower level windows are protected by heavy steel mesh. The heavy metal entrance doors are painted a bright blue, and a wooden fence frames the front walk of Carver. Remnants of a student garden in the front area of the building are visible. Bushes, shrubs and small trees border the front walk way. A small gravel-filled parking lot flanks one side of the building and modern plastic play structures, courtesy of the school's Partners in Education, adorn the opposite side of the building. Several basketball hoops occupy the black-topped area immediately behind the school, and behind the basketball hoops stretches a field maintained for soccer, football and outside recreation and sports activities. On a far side of the field sits an outdoor classroom structure. A chain link metal fence encircles the field. From the outside, Carver looks weathered and worn yet comfortable. Student work is visible from classroom windows.

Adjacent to Carver is an older neighborhood comprised of small one unit or single family dwellings. The mostly wooden frame houses were built between 1910 and 1930. It is the neighborhood where my parents first began their family. In fact, my parents' first house sits kitty corner from Carver. Many homes are owned by long-term residents, or they are starter homes for newer families. Few are rental properties. Local residents from all walks and cultural backgrounds have formed a strong neighborhood association called the East Park Neighborhood Association.

The Carver student population is fairly stable, but mobile. It is not uncommon for students to enroll, exit and reenter within the space of a school year. The mobility results in Carver students attending other east Waterloo elementaries or perhaps elementary schools in Mississippi or elsewhere and then returning to Carver. However, students generally attend school with the same classmates as the previous year. The majority of the families living in dwellings surrounding Carver are African American.

Despite its age, Carver is clean and well-kept. Upon entering Carver from the front door, a deep paneled wooden entry way with thick blue carpet is immediately visible. Huge plants are prominently displayed in the foyer. One of the kindergarten rooms is adjacent to the entryway and the hall leading up to it is decorated with student work. Along the main hallway, the media center, main office, family support worker office, gym, Headstart classroom, and one first-grade room, are located. The second floor houses the other first-grade room, as well as the second- and third-grade classrooms, the faculty lounge, a Title I classroom and a state-of-the-art computer lab. The third floor, affectionately called the penthouse, is home to the fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms, a classroom for children with special needs, and another Title I classroom. At the top of each stair landing are small rooms utilized as a guidance office and a resource room. Each floor houses boys' and girls' restrooms. Carver's interior is clean and well-kept, juxtaposed with the obvious age of the building.

Classrooms are colorful and inviting. Student work adorns the walls, windows and halls of Carver, reflecting its child-oriented atmosphere. Evidence of learning is everywhere. In classrooms, you can observe various centers, carpet squares and reading areas, tables, buckets and bins full of math and language manipulatives. Everywhere there are shelves and tubs full of books. Wall alphabets contain strings of words, and many classrooms display teacher-made posters and chart paper highlighting vocabulary from stories being read and discussed. Classroom and hallway bulletin boards highlight examples of student achievement such as those who have been designated students of the month. It is easy to discern what is being studied in individual classrooms based on displays of student work that document students' learning.

Carver's rich heritage, a predominantly African American student population, is mirrored in the abundance of literature by and about African American experience found in classrooms. The unique and Afrocentric names of children who attend Carver are further evidence of the school's prevailing African American student population. Beautiful, one-of-a-kind names like Sir Anthony, DonQuavious, Desiree, Alaija, DayQuon, ShyKeesha, LaQuinisha, Prince and Queen echo in the hallways and classrooms of Carver. The student population is also reflected in the many Afrocentric touches commonly found at Carver such as kinté cloth borders and bulletin board backgrounds. Posters of prominent African Americans are displayed throughout the building. The general feeling is one of cultural appropriateness. The children and their backgrounds surface in the impressions visitors get as they tour Carver and spend time in the building.

Each classroom also prominently displays "Peaceworks" posters, a commercial conflict resolution program, that has been adopted as Carver's schoolwide behavior management system. Peaceworks posters are posted throughout the school. Posters advocating Carver's mission statement (see Appendix F) and posters explaining Carver's body basics rules are strategically placed throughout the building, highly visible to all. Such artifacts are indicative of the emphasis placed on the awareness and implementation of appropriate behavior at Carver.

There is a vibrancy, a hum of productivity that permeates the atmosphere of Carver Elementary. It is a warm and inviting school where advocacy for the children who attend is clearly evident. The community's children bring warmth, sprit, and life to Carver.

During the period of this study, the principal at Carver was an African American woman. The school secretary was also African American. Twenty percent of the ten classroom teachers were African American. Both Title I teachers were White. Carver had sixteen faculty members classified as support staff. Those classifications included an expanded learning (talented and gifted) instructor, a vocal music teacher, an art and orchestra teacher, two band instructors, a physical education specialist, a media specialist, a nurse, a guidance counselor, a family support worker, a psychologist, an educational strategist and a speech clinician. In terms of special education, Carver also employed a full-time special education teacher and a part-time multicategorical resource teacher. Of these sixteen individuals, three are African American, the physical education specialist, the family support worker and the school psychologist. Six teacher associates were also assigned to Carver. One of the six is African American. The custodian is White. Of the four foodservice workers who are employed at Carver, just one is African American. While this study was being conducted, nine of the thirty adults assigned to Carver or roughly 33% are African American. That percentage is considerable higher than the 6.31 district average or the forty-six African American teachers within the total teaching population of 728 teachers.

A View from Within

Two key informants with strong ties to the city of Waterloo, the Black community, and the school district, were interviewed for this study. Their perceptions about the education provided African American students in the district and those enrolled at Carver follows (Please See Appendix G and H).

Belinda Jackson, a key informant in this study, holds a prestigious position within the Waterloo Community School District. Jackson is an Associate Superintendent for Human Resources in the Waterloo schools, one of the top central administrative positions in the district in terms of clout and salary. She not only holds a unique position in the educational community, but also in the Black community and the Waterloo community at large. Belinda Jackson was born and raised in Waterloo and graduated from East High School. She is a local daughter, a "homegirl," who has done well. Married to the same man for over twenty years, she has two daughters, one who attends a private Iowa college and the other who is a national high school basketball standout. She is an articulate, loyal and passionate member of Waterloo's Black Community.

Belinda Jackson also holds an appointment on the Iowa Board of Regents which oversees the state's public institutions of higher learning. As a member of the Board of Regents, Belinda Jackson wields a rare knowledge and experience base which greatly influences her educational decision making within the district. Her expertise as an educator and experiences as an African American professional give her a valued perspective. She possesses an extremely informed view of the workings of the district within the framework of the state of Iowa's educational arena and within the sphere of American public education.

After graduating from East High in 1970, she attended Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, graduating with a degree in Elementary education with double majors in theater and speech. She completed a Master's Degree from the North Central University (NCU) in Educational Psychology and is currently pursuing an Ed.D. in Educational Administration, also at NCU. Belinda Jackson's professional accomplishments are many; she has a myriad of education experiences from which to draw upon. Jackson began her career as a teacher, but also has experience directing a child care center. She has taught in several buildings in the Waterloo district and spent a short amount of time teaching at the Mercer Parks Laboratory School affiliated with NCU.

Belinda Jackson is a woman who demands respect. Standing nearly six feet tall, she is a very attractive woman in her late 40s. Simply put, she has a commanding presence. Jackson is an impeccable professional. She is always well-dressed, she is extremely well-informed, and she is both fervent and eloquent about issues related to the education of Black youth in Waterloo's schools.

To describe Belinda Jackson as busy is an understatement. She maintains a rigorous professional schedule balancing her obligations for the Waterloo Schools with graduate school, Regents' meetings and her family. She is active within the local community serving on several community boards, and she is an active member of Jubilee African American Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church as well.

Another key informant, Vanessa Carson Hart, is also an African American woman born and raised in Waterloo, Iowa. At the time this study was conducted, Carson Hart was into her first year as principal at Carver. Like Jackson, her family figured prominently in Waterloo's Black Community. After graduating from East High in 1967, Carson Hart earned a B.A degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Spanish, and she has earned a masters in Educational Administration. Like Jackson, she, too, is pursuing a doctorate in educational administration at NCU.

Carson Hart's educational experience is impressive and varied. She began her career at an elementary school in Iowa City, Iowa, and then taught in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She also spent three years as director of a Headstart program. Carson Hart has experience as a test editor for a major educational publishing company. In addition to teaching in Iowa, she has spent time working as a curriculum director, a director of elementary education and as an administrator in Oklahoma. Carson Hart also spent two years as an instructor of elementary methods courses at a local private college. Her wonderful background provides her with a comprehensive view of education.

Vanessa Carson Hart is straightforward and confident. Direct and businesslike, she is also very gracious. She carries herself with an air of self-sufficiency. A striking woman who presents herself as a consummate professional, she is experienced, very knowledgeable and has a passion for education that is infectious.

In an effort to further describe these two key informants, part of my interview questions focused on their personal philosophies toward education. Their views of teaching and learning add rich description to this layer of the nest.

Philosophical Perspectives

Belinda Jackson was principal at Carver for six years and was pivotal in creating the climate and culture of Carver during that time. When I applied for a Title I position at Carver, I initially applied because of the fine reputation Belinda Jackson had been instrumental in establishing for Carver. In the two years that I worked at Carver, Belinda Jackson was not only the administrator but the guiding force behind the school. She brought a wealth of experience to her position as Carver's principal. While at Carver, I often heard her describe herself as the "teamleader" at Carver, illustrating her collaborative approach to schooling. Teachers are viewed as colleagues and contemporaries, not subordinates. Belinda Jackson is a child-centered educator. Her words reflect her own approach to teaching:

> All students can and have the right to optimum learning experiences. All kids can learn. It's our responsibility as educators to figure out what we need to do and to do what ever it takes to help kids learn. I think we've kind of "sold out." The more I work with teachers and the longer my kids are in school, the more I'm starting to recognize that somewhere we missed the boat. Something happened. Teachers changed. And some of the things I used to scoff at, thought were ridiculous in terms of what was expected of a teacher, I'm starting to think might not have been all that bad.
>
> Many years ago, teachers used to, were expected to, make teaching their life. And now I see a lot of teachers where teaching is a very, very, very small piece of

> their life. So small that they've chosen not to even take responsibility for learning. A good teacher takes teaching seriously, as a responsibility. When kids don't learn, she looks at herself. She doesn't stamp a label on the kid's forehead and say there is something wrong with this kid. She continually looks for ways to change what she does to reach children. And she recognizes that she has a responsibility, and she should be able to make a change in children because she's a professional. And that's what she does.
>
> There's a number of teachers who go to school and they teach a lesson instead of teaching kids, and they walk away with no responsibility at all for learning. Examples are when kids, when teachers have a class and 60% of their kids get an F. They don't see anything bad about it. And they don't see that there is something they can do to change that. They don't feel it's anyone's responsibility other than the kids in that classroom.

Belinda Jackson was instrumental in establishing a climate of caring and concern at Carver and her obvious interest in the school has carried over into her job as an associate superintendent. Vanessa Carson Hart, her successor at Carver, maintained the culture of student advocacy that had been established. Carson Hart's personal philosophy regarding education is centered on the home-school partnership. She offers an engaging metaphor of education.

> Well, I believe in the partnership between home and school. I can't emphasize how critical that is. In our society I realize that the reality of that situation [family] in that there are gonna be different perspectives about that partnership. Some families have the desire to cultivate the partnership but they lack the resources. Some families do not have the desire. Some families have the desire and the resources. But, on the other side of that partnership, educators have to work with these three perspectives. What saddens me is we still have educators who espouse the philosophy that "all children can learn," but they don't see their role in implementing that. Yes, all children can learn! If we pull out all the stops. If we as educators can be

> successful with home-school partnerships. That philosophy needs to become a reality. Sometimes I hear from educators that a lot of parents aren't supportive of this and that and the other. Well I think it's a war out there, you know, the streets are battling us for our kids, all kinds of other detractors are there. As educators we are the warriors, and I mean we have to pull out all the stops and make sure kids get all the armament they need.

Carson Hart's warrior-teacher metaphor is powerful. It highlights that battle she sees being waged in American education, and her metaphor reflects my own experiences in the Waterloo schools' "trenches."

Carson Hart's passion for children, especially African American children attending Carver, and her concern for children is genuine; her desire to affect change and her belief in herself are almost religious. She knows the additional burden African American children bear. She has shouldered these burdens herself and has watched her own two children do the same.

Cultural Mismatch in the Classroom:
Inventing Classroom Culture

My impressions as a novice researcher often mirrored my feelings as a new teacher; I often felt like a traveler in a foreign land. Many times, notably during interviews, I felt uncomfortable asking pointed questions of both Belinda Jackson and Vanessa Carson Hart. My questions probed their own feelings about the Waterloo district, their employer. I was especially uncomfortable asking about the education

African American children received in Waterloo. I had to frequently overcome my discomfort and remind myself that the point of my research was to offer a more informed view of cultural and linguistic diversity. A trust between myself and these two informants was based on mutual circumstances and mutual respect--we knew each other as colleagues, we were bound together by a shared employer, we shared a sense of loyalty to the children of Carver and each of us enrolled our own children in the system. I felt a huge responsibility to represent their responses ethically. Asking Belinda and Vanessa to articulate their views regarding the state of education for African American children in Waterloo was one such instance where I was acutely aware that my questions raised sensitive issues for them both personally and professionally. Belinda and Vanessa's trust in me was evident. They knew the weight of their answers was significant.

Belinda Jackson was very careful, diplomatic and guarded when she described her views of the state of education for African American children in the Waterloo school district. She laughed nervously, paused and suggested that I turn off my tape recorder. Aware of the importance of her response in terms of her stature in the district and community, she struggled to find the best words. After much thought, deliberation and squirming in her chair, she responded with a simple, yet powerful statement.

> All African American students in our district are not afforded the opportunity to have teachers who believe they can learn. Many of our African American students have teachers who have very low expectations of their ability, and I think it's the responsibility of the community. There have to be people out there who are continuously saying no this isn't good enough no this isn't good enough. It can't be just Black parents saying that. It has to be all parents saying that, all community people saying that. More powerful, it needs to be teaching colleagues saying that. Colleagues who say, Have you ever thought about trying this? You know I had that student once or I've had a student just like that and they were able to learn this way. As teachers we learn by sharing knowledge about children with each other.

Vanessa Carson Hart's description of the state of education for African American children in Waterloo, signifies her view that education is a fierce battle, especially for African American youth. I sensed that Vanessa Carson Hart relishes this battle, seeing it as the "good fight." She contextualized her answers within traditional measures of success.

> If we were to look solely at statistics and the numbers, it's a bleak picture. The African American child typically is at the bottom of standardized test scores, in terms of learning fulfillment. Even when you look at other indicators, participation by parents, participation in extra curricular activities and so on, you are certainly looking at less involvement by families, by parents and students who happen to be African American.
>
> But I think there are a lot of other factors we need to look at. It is just not that way just because they happen to be [African American]. We have to look real closely at some equity issues. For instance, what are we doing as a district to encourage students who don't traditionally participate in extra curricular activities? What are we doing as a district for example, to address the fact that there is a disproportionate number of African American boys in special education? What are we doing as a district to

> address the fact that there is a disproportionate number of suspensions and expulsions involving African American students?

Juxtaposing Belinda and Vanessa's views of the district with that of Carver as a distinct and unique place highlighted their advocacy for children. It was clear they felt that Carver was and continues to be a special place for African American children. I asked Belinda to reminisce about what made Carver so special. Her recollections follow.

> I think that there was a core group of teachers. And I think you have to have a core of people who are willing to focus on students. I think we were able to become a family. One good thing about that family was we fought hard together, we played hard together, we worked hard together. I think it was a caring environment. I really do think people cared about each other and they all cared about kids. And none was afraid of work, that's a biggie. Teaching is not easy. It's a very difficult task. Working with students is a draining, difficult task. Working with students who have other issues is even more draining and difficult. We were able to do that and everyone there believed in kids. They believed that all kids could learn. And every now and then when we'd get a new teacher who really didn't buy into that, the culture was so strong that it was able to shape and form them into a member of the group. They either joined the group or they left. I didn't realize how strong that culture was until recently.

Although Carson Hart was just in her first year as Carver's principal at the time of her formal interview, she isolated the many factors, including the family-oriented approach cultivated by Belinda Jackson, that make the school so unique.

> In my less-than-one year tenure here what I sense as a uniqueness in Carver, is that it is a small school and thank God it is comprised of teachers who really are whole-child oriented. They look at the child in terms of all of the factors that comprise that child. The

> social, emotional, physical along with academics and learning needs are considered. I think that that is one uniqueness about Carver. We also have staff members who have been here for a significant length of time, and they carry this rich tradition of familyhood. At our staff meetings, we talk about how even staff members feel a sense of family toward each other.
>
> Another uniqueness is that it is a neighborhood school. And as such, we have very few children who live outside the neighborhood. We only have two buses of children who are bussed in. Probably less than forty-five children are bussed in. Children have a real sense of pride to go to a school that is in their neighborhood. They come here, and they play on the weekends and after school. I feel they look out for this school. Their brothers and sisters have gone to this school, and in many cases, so have mom and dad. That gives a richness to the climate.

It is evident that Carson Hart deeply appreciates the rich and wonderful cultural history of Carver. She is proud of the school and of the team of educators and support staff she leads.

Language Choice Decisions

Language is not just a form of communication rather it is also a means of identifying with a group's identity and how language is often a cultural marker. Belinda Jackson, like Turner (1996), Jackson (1992) and Delpit (1992), suggests that labeling groups according to culture and in terms of speech patterns is detrimental. Jackson believes that viewing Black children as speakers of certain kinds of speech is problematic. For Jackson, assigning language to a group based on ethnicity is stereotypical, harmful.

> One of the reasons I have very, very different view about Black English is because it becomes just that.

> And I am really concerned when we try to determine how a person of color is supposed to speak. That really concerns me... we get into this he's talking White, he's talking Black. That's really been an issue. That was an issue for me when I was a kid, for my kids, and it was an issue for my mother. My mother was born in a house on the corner of Cottage and North Barclay [in East Waterloo]. It was an issue for her and her sister. In fact another person whose name I will not share once said, You know your mama and your aunt act White. They took music lessons and were like White kids. And it's really interesting because when you said that [about overhearing children being teased for speaking proper] I remembered, Nina (Jackson's teen-aged daughter) was with me when she said that at the time and she was totally offended. I've often heard people say things to Nina about the way she speaks. That's not fair. There's a group of Black educators in this nation who speak standard English and they were, at a time, the norm of the educated Black man or woman. And somewhere that's gotten lost. They are teaching at Spellman and Howard and other great institutions that they are not seen as Black. What we see as Black now is what we see on (Black Entertainment Television) BET. And that's hurt us! I will not buy that. I will not say that's Black language. NO! Uh-uh! That's just the way some Black kids happen to talk.

The various Black teachers of Schaafsma's (1993) study differed considerably in their position about the appropriateness of "eating on the street" and when and where Black English was appropriate, with the older, more traditional Black teacher adamantly opposed to Black English. Like Turner (1996) Jackson sees a range of speech patterns existing within any given population of African Americans. She refuses to specifically label a group according to culture or ethnicity or to claim that all African Americans speak Black English. For Jackson, Ebonics is a conceptual framework that requires teachers to accept, dignify and validate each and every child' home language. Jackson sees Ebonics as an effort to address negative and prevailing attitudes about language diversity.

> I think the crux of the Ebonics issue that's really causing concern in the Black community among educators is that they don't want to be pegged! That's not what I think Ebonics is talking about. I think it's about getting a message out to educators saying, Look, this is what ya got, you got these kids who talk a particular way. The best way to teach them is to understand who they are, and the best way to do that is to understand what they are saying, and in order to understand what they are saying you have to take a look at how they are speaking. We missed that. We missed that!

Part of my reason for selecting Belinda Jackson as a key informant was that she is such a powerful demonstration of a person's ability to code switch. She truly is able to effortlessly move between two distinct speech patterns, Black English and standard English, reading situations and deciding what speech is appropriate for what situation or context. I had observed Belinda Jackson many times in the two years that I taught at Carver, and I marveled at her ability to read people and situations and to speak accordingly. Her response to issues of language diversity touches upon the tensions that exist when children are forced to code switch in order for them to successfully negotiate two distinct cultures and worlds. Jackson views language as part of the broader cultural piece.

> How children speak becomes who they are. Because of that, instead of dealing with that, this is how you talk at home, that's cool, but here, these are some things you need to learn how to do. We just say, that's who they are and because they speak that way, we can't

> interface with them. How they speak, what ever they are saying can't be of value because of how they say it. We tend to judge it and go on. What hasn't occurred to a lot of people is that their inability to break the code, to deal with that language is an ineptness on them! It has nothing to do with the child. If I am teaching a child, in order to really interact with them, I need to know who they are. I need to know what they are saying.

Carson Hart easily explained her perspective on Black English, and also shared the many tensions she experienced regarding language, both as a child and as an adult. She readily offered her views on language appropriateness in the academic setting.

> I recognize Ebonics or Black English, and if it's a matter of semantics, I don't even care to get into that distinction. I recognize the fact that many African Americans use a form of communication that is unique to that culture. But, not all African Americans came from that experience where they use that form of communication. As an African American I feel enriched by it [Black English]. It adds another layer to my communication that is very useful to me in my position.
>
> As far as in the educational setting, I support the position of having teachers be sensitive and sensitized to the fact and presence of that form of communication with the focus on all of our children realizing that there is a language that is common for work and business and for certain types of settings and then there is another language for other settings.
>
> As an African American parent, I don't want my kids to be monolingual. I don't want them to think that Black English is the only way to talk because it is acceptable within their group their culture.

Carson Hart sees Ebonics as a two-sided issue. She understands that the Ebonics movement in Oakland is a good thing, that its intentions of increasing teachers' awareness and sensitivity toward the language and culture of children is positive. Yet, she also understands the opposition to such a program.

> From what I understand, there are two sides to this issue. There is the perception that Ebonics will be taught as a separate language, like we do the Spanish language. On the other side is the view the Ebonics is a way to sensitize teachers on how to become knowledgeable about language so they can better help children.

Bicultural Demands

What happens when children are raised in one speech system, but are forced to acquire another in order to fit into the mainstream? What do we demand of African American students in Waterloo? These questions, posed to Belinda Jackson, allow me to be reflective about my own speech patterns and the communities that I claim as a White, mainstream, female educator. Black children are forced to be bicultural and bilingual whereas I'm not, not unless I choose to be. I do not ever have to be. I can slide right through my life and stay right where I'm at in terms of culture, linguistics and language. Jackson's comment that Black children have to "make that leap" regarding being diglossic is a key statement. She articulated what many school officials, and even law-making public officials, choose to ignore.

> I think it's an additional responsibility, burden if you will, that our kids have to do it. Because that's the name of the game. Black kids have to "make that leap." They have to be able to understand, okay, this is how you can talk to your friends, and this is how you talk at home and the way you talk to your friends now is NOT the way you talk at home. Don't we do that anyway?

> Outside the cultural arena? We do that anyway. And I think that's the piece that you find Black students who have achieved are better at that. Because they have had to make greater leaps than the average White person in understanding.

Culturally Responsive Decisions

Tensions created when children are required to negotiate the demands of two speech systems can be alleviated by culturally responsive teachers. Jackson directly pointed to both Delores Fox and Terri Hall, other key informants in this study, as being illustrative of the kind of teacher she wants to see in diverse, Waterloo classrooms.

> What we need to do is what the Delores's and Terri's of this world are doing. We need to recognize that there are, that kids come with different language patterns and they come with different values and we're not going to impose our values on them but rather, we have a responsibility to help them be successful. One way to do that is help them move toward standard English, if you will. Uh, in order to do that you don't put kids down, you don't make them feel how they speak is less than, or that it's not appreciated, because they are communicating! We just need to figure out a different way to help them communicate.
>
> Educators have a responsibility to attempt to understand what kids are saying. If we can read invented spelling and expect that and never move toward correcting that. Well, I have an invented speller in my house still because no one ever corrected her, no one ever helped move her on to the next stage. That's kind of what we need to do. That editing stage is what we are all about, but first we have to allow that first language, that expression to come out.
>
> One of the pieces of diversity is to see a range of uniqueness. Then you are not saying all Black kids talk this way. If kids are able to see a range in a classroom, then they can do this approximation thing. They take risks. They recognize you talk different in different situations.

Jackson offered a few final comments about her own views on how universities can improve knowledge and understanding of language diversity among preservice teachers. She addressed her remarks to the NCU community and the Waterloo district.

> Well, we haven't gotten to the point where we can retain diversity among administrators [in this area]. It's a non-issue at NCU because the students are so White and so are the professors. It's very easy for it to be a non-issue in that type of environment. Curriculum needs to be looked at. You hit on it. Diversity is not addressed. It needs to be addressed in every curricular area, but it's not.
>
> Serious staff development related to curricular issues, related to communication issues around diversity needs to happen. The responsibility that one person used to have in a district, the MCNS or equity director, needs to be taken on by everyone. It really concerns me when we argue that issues of diversity are the responsibility of just one person, a person of color. That bothers me greatly. It's all of our responsibility. Teacher training, districts, individuals, all need to work together to help teachers made aware of difference, and that they be expected to teach all kids.

Belinda Jackson's position within the district is a vital one and Belinda Jackson bears a heavy burden of responsibility toward the children and parents of Waterloo. Her lens affords her an informed and respected view of the Waterloo schools.

With her lengthy experiences as both an educator and an administrator, Carson Hart's views on what the district could be doing to address diversity, especially language diversity issues and the role of universities in adequately preparing teacher education majors, were informative. Carson Hart is a big advocate of raising consciousness among educators as a starting point in the diversity debate.

> The first place to start is that staff members need to be brought up to a level of awareness about diversity. There needs to be that awareness first. Then sensitivity. From there we can start looking at appropriate strategies that help African American children to move forward. I don't want the language difference to be a negative factor. First off, we need to look at teachers achieving awareness. There needs to be more focus on different approaches to accommodating differences. We need to look at approaches that are successful in making sure that language diversity is not a negative factor in children's learning. We need to have more focus on looking at different programs, different approaches. We stop at the awareness level. At the teacher prep level, it's like well, you'll get that from your local district. At this point in the game, local districts aren't doing a lot either.

Carson Hart's perspective mirrors Banks (1991) assertion that too many teachers stop at the awareness level. Too many teachers, including many in the Waterloo system, do not promote an equity pedagogy. Instead of truly infusing cultural differences into their curriculum, they promote one shot multicultural or what many refer to as a "tourist curriculum" where African Americans are highlighted in February and women's history is explored in March.

Both Belinda Jackson, associate superintendent, and Vanessa Carson Hart, elementary administrator, bring to their positions within the Waterloo schools a high degree of educational experience and schooling. Both women believe in child-centered approaches to teaching and learning that rely heavily on home-school involvement and sensitive, aware educators. Both women also illustrate the layers of the nesting design that the Waterloo Community School District and Carver Elementary represent in this study.

Cultural conflict is a very real issue in American public school classrooms, including classrooms in Waterloo. Table 13 is a summary of descriptors used to characterize the tensions that result from cultural conflict.

In response to the tensions of cultural conflict, many researchers investigate and identify specific teaching practices that address the tensions of cultural conflict for African American children. Table 14 summarizes teaching methods that apply to cultural conflict tensions.

Viewed as entities, school districts can be perceived as being microcosms of society. School districts tend to reflect the ethnicity and class of the communities in which they are located as well as the views and perceptions of the_

Table 13. Descriptions of the Tensions of Cultural Conflict

---

reciprocal ignorance (Labov, 1972)
linguistic discrimination (Goodman & Buck, 1973)
cultural mismatch (Hale-Benson, 1986)
caste-like stratification (Ogbu, 1986)
problem of Black children & White teachers (Paley, 1989)
discourse stacking (Delpit, 1992)
culturally alien environments (Delpit, 1992)

Table 14. Teaching Styles and Approaches That Address Cultural Conflict

teacher's interactional style (Piestrup, 1973)
Black artful style (Piestrup, 1973)
cultural continuity (Foster, 1989)
performance style of communication (Foster 1989; 1995)
call & response (Foster 1989; 1995)
cross speaker anaphora (Foster 1989; 1995)
culturally responsive pedagogy (Foster, 1992)
finer perspective (Schaafsma, 1993)

publics that form the school population. School districts also function in response to historical and political forces. Like schools everywhere, the Waterloo schools, by their very nature, perpetuate the norms, mores and standards of the society at large while maintaining the systems of education.

Traditional learning environments such as public schools and classrooms have emphasized the cultural assimilation of African American students as opposed to a pedagogy that affirms African American cultural heritage (Lee, 1995). The unique ethnicity and language patterns of Carver students contribute to the school's special culture. That school culture is maintained by the educators of Carver, especially Delores Fox and Terri Hall, who recognize the variety of expression that exists in the homes of Carver families and in the classrooms of Carver. True, sincere multicultural teaching demands not only curricular change but also a change in school climate and a change in pedagogy (Banks, 1991; Hale-Benson, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lee, 1994). Both Terri and Delores exemplify true multicultural teaching practice which Banks (1991) defines as an equity pedagogy.

Individual school buildings tend to reflect the philosophies of both the administrators and especially individual teachers who help shape and maintain the individual culture of a building. Two vital key informants for this study, fourth-fifth grade combination teachers, Delores Fox and Terri Hall, are examples of individual teachers who respond to student populations by recognizing, validating and accommodating the unique cultural contributions of their students. Chapter VI reports findings about the two teachers whose classrooms became the research site for this study, the students they teach, language use in these classrooms and the teaching practices of these two educators.

CHAPTER VI

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AT THE HEART OF CURRICULUM: THE CORE OF THE NEST

> "The future of the nation is on the shoulders of the teachers and how they teach kids; the future of the world is in the classroom where the teachers are. If you have any chance to guarantee a positive bridge to the twenty-first century, it is how we educate the children in the classrooms today."
>
> Richard Green
> (Hale, 1994, p.189)

In chapter VI, I present the inner layers of this study, the focal students and the teachers in these two fourth-fifth grade combination classrooms. An in-depth examination of one focal student named Marcus and his language concludes this chapter. As the core or essence of this study, Marcus is an African American child who speaks Black English and attends Carver Elementary in Waterloo, Iowa. Marcus has strong ties to the rural Mississippi Delta area that is "home" to so many members of Waterloo, Iowa's Black Community.

From a mountain of data, slowly but surely, a story emerged during data analysis, a story about genuine children and true teachers in an actual school within a real district comprised of sincere individuals. My words, a rendering of the voices of my informants, provide a sense of their world, Carver Elementary, a school in a place called Waterloo.

This is my story, and theirs. In this chapter readers will learn about the belief systems of the two teachers involved in this study and how their beliefs allow them to invent culturally relevant pedagogy through overt teaching behaviors. Readers will also acquire a sense of how the children of this study use language.

Data analysis revealed that Delores and Terri shared a philosophical belief system that centers on the whole child. The classroom environments of these two educators paralleled their belief systems. Their overt teaching behaviors were the most revealing factor in these teachers' belief systems. However, before I explore the findings from analysis about teaching behaviors, I will summarize each teacher's philosophy and how it is conveyed through their classroom environments.

Belief System

The commitment that each of the classroom teachers in this study has to her respective students highlights the passion with which they both teach. They share a deep love for Carver that is echoed by their personal philosophies of education (See Appendix I). Delores stated her philosophy simply yet powerfully.

> I would probably say, that, for one thing, I think you can take kids from where they're at and move them as far

> and as quickly as you can to a point where they can be successful. I think that all kids can be successful.

Terri shares her philosophy as well. She also expounded a little, sharing her view of the state of education for African American children in the Waterloo system.

> I believe that all kids can learn and that basically my goal is for the kids coming in to my class, I want you to be a better student and a better person. I would say that the state of education for African American students in Waterloo is bleak at times. That's probably why I spend so much time in my curriculum making my students aware of all kinds of African Americans throughout history that have made contributions to our society. Uh-m, prejudice and discrimination are alive and well, here in Waterloo, and in a lot of communities. And not that we don't have students who are successful who are African American, but it seems to be a more difficult way for my African American students.

Environment: Delores Fox's Room

One of the most notable aspects of Delores's practice is the environment she establishes in her classroom. She has firmly incorporated a routine for when students arrive at school and enter her classroom. Each morning she stands at the doorway of her classroom and quietly greets the students as they arrive. She calls them by name, remarking to or complimenting everyone. Sometimes she asks how they are, or she comments on hair and clothes. She asks others about missing work or homework. As the situation dictates, she reminds certain students of special obligations they might have that day such as band or orchestra lessons or Expanded Learning Programming (ELP).

The greeting rituals she has established build a sense of community and result in her students' knowing what is expected of them each day as they enter the classroom. They greet their teacher, enter the classroom, take off wraps, take chairs down from their respective desks, and sharpen their pencils. Students are businesslike and full of purpose. The following student language samples exemplify how Delores's routines are firmly established classroom protocol, “Hi Mz. Fox, how you? and Mz. Fox, what we doin’ t’day? “or “What we doin’ first? It on the board?” The classroom exudes a businesslike and productive feeling. Shortly after the bell rings, Delores takes attendance, makes announcements and then immediately directs students’ attention to the math anticipatory set she has placed on each student's desk. The transition from daily housekeeping duties to actually teaching is effortless and smooth. Students are immediately engaged in an academic task.

Delores's room is warm and inviting and is full of tools for her students’ learning adventures. It is a shared space belonging to her and to her students, yet it is clear that she leads the students in procedures, routine and expectations. Her classroom decor reflects her child-oriented approach to teaching, her philosophy and her deep commitment to her students. Different posters adorn her walls. There is a prominently displayed “Peaceworks” poster which highlights appropriate school behavior. There is a student helper chart located by the door and several motivational posters occupy space on her four walls. There is a readers workshop procedure poster and a poster that conveys how to avoid bad beginnings for writing. Desks are arranged in a square, and her teacher's desk is located in the back of the room, away from students' work areas.

Tubs of books line one whole wall of her classroom, and their very existence exemplifies Delores's belief that student choice in reading material is important. The tubs contain numerous books by authors such as Phil Mendez, Cheryl Willis Hudson and Bernette Ford, Eloise Greenfield, Robert D. San Souci, John Steptoe and Virginia Hamilton, and there are also books by illustrators such as Jerry Pinkney, Leo and Diane Dillon and George Ford. A podium and overhead are placed at the front of the room and she uses both to help her organize and teach. A small carpet square is located in the rear of the room next to shelves that hold reference books. Each day after lunch she assembles her class on the rug and reads aloud to them, typically reading six to ten novels a year in this manner.

Delores builds relationships by conveying her genuine personal interest in her students. Delores manages many student behaviors by directing activities and establishing procedures and classroom routines. Her classroom is business-like yet very pleasant.

Environment: Terri Hall's Room

Located on the third floor of Carver, just across the hall from Delores's room is Terri's room. Each morning Terri also positions herself at the door of her classroom, like Delores, affording her a simultaneous view of both the hallway and classroom. She also greets and welcomes students as they enter her room. She makes a point to use student names constantly while addressing them, ensuring a feeling of familiarity and establishing a protocol of mutual respect for her classroom. She begins by asking students to get in their seats and pay attention. She repeats her directions often, but when she feels not enough students are paying attention to her requests, she begins to count backwards from five. By the time she reaches three, students are typically sitting quietly at their desks, attentive and ready to learn. Terri explains clearly what the order for the day will be, giving concise and explicit instructions. She indicates respect for students by thanking them often for paying attention and following her directions.

Terri's room is full of materials and opportunities for learning. Her room contains seventeen tubs full of books, indicative of her belief in choice. Like Delores, many of these tubs contain books written and illustrated by African Americans and about African American experience. I noticed multiple copies of many of Mildred Taylor's novels and short stories in Terri's tubs. Various posters decorate her walls and convey powerful messages about her teaching practice. Posters of and information about eminent and illustrious African Americans adorn her walls. Banners of famous Black leaders stare down upon the children working in her classroom. Her Peaceworks poster is prominently displayed. Other posters function as instructional tools proclaiming the five steps to good writing, possible sentence starters, strategic word attack techniques (SWAT), reading motivation slogans as well as a poster detailing the three types of books for readers' workshop. Her room overflows with books, materials and plants. She has a wealth of material crammed into her room. It is crowded but inviting. Literacy tools such as paper, pencils, crayons and markers are stored at various places throughout the room. Children have quick and ready access to such materials. A hum of productive activity characterizes her classroom.

There is a strong feeling of mutual respect and belonging in her room. Children are treated as individuals, and she demands they treat one another accordingly. Terri clearly establishes routines and procedures, yet within her transmission orientation, she incorporates a great deal of individual choice.

Both Delores and Terri have a teaching style suited to the African American child. They recognize, validate and dignify the primary discourse of their students while demonstrating and teaching standard English. In order to accomplish these dual language goals, they have developed a teaching style that is unique and fits the needs of Carver's children. These teachers are true child advocates; they share a whole child-oriented philosophy.

Being Direct

Data analysis unveiled that both Delores and Terri possess a direct teaching style and use overt teaching behaviors that are culturally appropriate for their majority African American student population and expected of them as well. The next section details the data-driven analysis of their teaching style.

Delpit (1995) and Hale-Benson (1986) address the direct, authoritarian style that many Black children expect in the classroom. These researchers claim that many White educators do not employ a direct style, and as a result, they are not respected by their African American students.

> Black children expect an authority figure to act with authority. The authoritative teacher can control the class through exhibition of personal power; establishes meaningful interpersonal relationships that garner student respect; exhibits a strong belief that all children can learn; establishes a standard of achievement and "pushes" the students to achieve that standard; and holds the attention of the students by incorporating features of black communicative style in his or her teaching (Delpit, 1995, pp. 35-36).

The directness of Delores and Terri's teaching styles affirms their knowledge and acceptance of their Black students. Both teachers are very direct verbally with their students. For instance, one day as I was observing Delores collect a running record from a student, I watched her momentarily turn her attention from the child in front of her to her entire classroom. She interrupted Rachel, the student who was reading, to address Arnold who was leaning sideways out of his desk, watching what was happening in the hallway. Delores put her hand on Rachel's arm and quickly called out to Arnold, "Get back to work and sit in that seat correctly!"

Only a few students paused from their reading to look up, but Arnold shot back into an upright position and immediately reopened his reading book. He never made eye contact, and Delores returned to Rachel, apologized to her for the interruption and signaled her to continue. Arnold maintained his posture and continued his silent reading for the remainder of the class.

Another time, Debra was attempting to balance on the back of her chair during a discussion. As Delores's eyes were surveying the room, she noticed Debra's precarious balance. Emphatically Delores commanded, "Sit! " Debra immediately returned her chair to all four legs.

In still another instance, Delores point-blank addressed a child who was talking loudly during a computer session in the computer lab. She stated in a voice that was firm and loud but without a tinge of anger, "LaQuetta, you don't need to be that loud!" LaQuetta quieted instantly and having been chastised, kept her eyes downcast on her computer. As with her classmates, Arnold and Debra, she did not repeat the offending behavior for the remainder of that class period.

Delores uses voice control in her classroom and her direct, honest and to-the-point verbal responses allow her to effectively manage her students' behaviors. Quite often I observed her over-ride or over-talk students who were being too loud and disruptive. Most times, a simple verbal command, issued in a straightforward manner conveys her intention toward students. As I observed I often heard her say quickly and resolutely such commands as, "Sit!" or "Quiet" or "Now!" It is not so much what she says but the direct manner in which she conveys who is in charge in her classroom. Other examples include her forthright directions such as, "I want your hands in your laps and I want your eyes up here" or her exclamation during a noisy lab demonstration, "Stop it. I'm not going to keep talking while you are talking." She is very firm and direct during these times and students respond to her verbal commands immediately. Delores understands that her students expect her to behave as an authority figure and she meets their expectations.

Terri is direct in much the same way. Her no-nonsense manner is highly effective with her students. When she speaks, her students listen and obey. Part of Terri's directness is her honesty when dealing with children; she often appeals to their sense of logic as she instructs them. One time I heard her exclaim loudly, "There are twenty-five of you and only one of me!" This brought an immediate response from students. Another time Terri exclaimed as students' voices accelerated beyond what she thought was tolerable, "I really do not want to compete with anyone!" Again students quieted immediately.

Other times, Terri was more to-the-point in her admonitions. Often I heard such comments as, "Voices off!" or, "Turn voices OFF!" or "Sit down. Everyone! I need it quiet and you need to listen!" Terri, like Delores never let behavior concerns or situations escalate. She too, dealt with issues as swiftly as possible. Often I heard her tell children that they needed to "Take your medicine, take your medicine and be done with it" meaning accept the consequences for your own behavior. In fact, in forty-one observations, I noticed Terri repeat this phrase seventeen times.

Terri used voice control and a direct approach to manage her class. She directly informed her class that their talkativeness was irritating her. On one occasion, she stopped class and announced that, "Anel is NOT here for you to pick on, is that clear?" A chorus of yes ma'ams and uh-huhs responded. In another incident, during a work session, Terri suddenly announced that, "The talk about Javannia in Ms. Fox's room needs to stop." She gazed around the room, eyeing everyone and then asked to no one in particular, "Is that clear?"

At other times when she was clearly irritated at behavior, she asked in a tight angry voice, "Understood?" or "Knock it off, NOW!" or "Quit being so rude!" These types of comments drew immediate responses. Students quieted or stopped offending behaviors immediately. Often they went about their work in a subdued manner.

Terri was also very direct and authoritative about how children treated one another. She believed that socializing her students is a big part of her job. I often heard such comments as, "You don't need to be so hoggish, stop hogging the girls' area at recess," stated when the boys became too aggressive at recess and caused problems that spilled over into her classroom. At the conclusion of one such incident when the boys had overrun the girls' four-square space on the playground and the girls entered her classroom after lunch recess angry and loud, she addressed the class, "You are so snotty and ugly to each other." She addressed the issue head-on by asking the students streaming into her room what was wrong. As the girls began to complain and tell their side of the story and the boys began to shout back their side of the issue, she abruptly stated to the entire class, "Things need to change." She was angry about the situation and her voice, posture and face conveyed her intenseness. Students were quiet, many with heads bowed and eyes downcast as she ended with a comment, "Maybe I need to be takin' some points away from people who keep runnin' their mouths!" The room became quiet almost immediately as those girls and boys who continued to bicker ceased talking at her sharp voice and words.

Terri also over-talked students by using voice control and she did it effectively. Like Delores, she used her voice to manage and control behaviors, and she did this quite successfully.

What is most apparent about both teachers is that they acknowledge, accept and appreciate culture and language differences, and they value the unique contributions of their students. They understand African American children in the context of their culture. They understand the verbal playfulness of their students. They also know that most of their Black students expect them to act in certain ways as authority figures. They are direct with voice commands, to-the-point with verbal demands and they exude an authoritarian air with their students. As a result, they experience few behavior management problems as they teach.

Reducing Cultural Mismatch in the Classroom

Both Delores and Terri view their students as individuals. They dignify individuality. They relish the environment at Carver, seeing it as unique and special. In describing the staff at Carver during a conversation with me halfway through the data collection period, they also described themselves.

> We have teachers here who are more sensitive. We have teachers here who work very hard at trying to be equitable. Trying to work with kids from where they are at. Making kids feel good about who they are, about

> their culture. People don't know how different Carver is. It's not the norm here.
>
> We have a caring staff. I can't think of anyone who doesn't work really, really hard. We function as a family. I think it makes a difference. We really and truly care about kids and work hard. We work as a team. We've been lucky in that a lot of people do share a vision of school. We've had people come and go. A lot just sort of meld into what we have.

While both educators recognize that Carver is different from other elementary buildings in Waterloo, they express anger and frustration at district colleagues who judge and classify African American children because of their culture and language. Throughout the course of this study, Terri expressed her bewilderment at some of her colleagues from across the district.

> A lot of Waterloo educators couple poverty with being African American. They don't distinguish or see a difference. I see a difference. Carver deals with a lot of low SES. When people ask me where I teach they say, Oh! You've got all those Black kids! We have a lots of different cultures at this school but we also deal with poverty. We try to overcome that on a daily basis here and I don't see the two of them [African American and poor] being linked together.

Terri's contempt for some of her teaching colleagues in the Waterloo schools who ignore and judge language differences was apparent. Rather pointedly Terri directed a rhetorical question to those individuals, "How about quit discriminating against our kids?"

Delores shared her views on cultural mismatch in the classroom not only as a Waterloo educator but as a single Black parent with children in the system. Delores defined the state of education for African American children in Waterloo simply.

> Dangerous. And I say that because I teach in the system and I have kids that are in the system. I know the struggles I've gone through with my own kids. The equity issues that Waterloo, that a lot of Waterloo teachers refuse to deal with. The sensitivity issues that they refuse to deal with. It's not so much you're talking about two different cultures. And a lot of times some teachers are constantly telling kids that certain cultures aren't as good. You learn early from some teachers, you are a minority. You're not as good.
>
> I think a lot of times our kids are shot down before they are given a chance. They come in with being very creative, very willing to try. A lot of our students come to us speaking Black English. But yet they are shot out of the water. The creative teacher says to such a students, hey that's a really good idea! Let's reword it this way or let's try it this way. But instead a lot of Black children don't receive credit for their ideas.

Terri responded to the issue of cultural mismatch in the classroom much the same way as Delores. Terri stated her views more bluntly.

> I think Waterloo needs to deal with covert, hidden racism. They just need to get this stuff on the table. It's so...I just get so....it's so. I mean we had this meeting with Jeff Howard, a national expert on efficacy. When you have people in a district who say we don't have tracking. These are high school people. I'm like what?
>
> You should have heard some of the comments that day. Unbelievable! Carver, I think most of us were appalled. Because we didn't feel the same way as some of the people who were commenting.

Delores nodded in affirmation as Terri spoke. She supported Terri's recollections of a disastrous district-wide meeting.

> And these were not elementary people who were saying this. These were secondary people. They said we didn't track. What do you call it when you have pre-algebra and algebra? What do you call it? That is a track. Is it not? So I think until we deal with some of the underlying issues, I don't think you can force people. Well, maybe you can. But you need some ways to get people to take a good look at themselves and their motives and the equity issues here. That's part of it.

Terri agreed. She offered an example of what she sees as covert racism and what other Waterloo educators chose to ignore.

> Like an example, we were talking about West High's students of the month. None have been African American. Yet their African American student population is what, nearly 50%? I have a big problem with that. And I've heard about West forever, race relations that is. I think we need to get down to those issues. We need to give those teachers who refuse to change an opportunity to leave. If we don't we will continue to have these problems. Basically, it's an attitude problem. Absolutely. There's prejudice and people are acting on it.

Knowledge of Teaching Reading and Writing

In addition to knowing their students and recognizing and validating cultural backgrounds, classroom observations documented that both educators also know a great deal about reading and writing. They capitalize on students' oral language development, while extending written language skills.

While reading aloud, both women take time to introduce books to their students. They initiate reading aloud by showing books, talking about authors and asking their students to explain titles. In this way, they activate prior knowledge and build interest in reading. They ask for predictions and pause often to confirm and dis-confirm those predictions. Such discussions may seem loose and unorganized to a casual observer. To me, I saw two educators who accentuate, maximize and highlight students' oral language development while skillfully managing and directing that verbalness.

In Terri's classroom, reading aloud is a daily ritual. A director's chair sits in the front of her classroom. It is as high as a stool, and it is decorated with puff fabric paint. In bold colorful letters it says, "author." It is here that she reads aloud to students and occasionally, as a special honor, students get to sit there.

Literature discussions in Terri's room are lively, yet controlled. Students usually answer her questions but also talk among themselves and ask each other further questions. Students frequently speak out spontaneously, giving summaries of what has been read to them, offering highlights of chapters or asking spur-of-the-moment questions.

On one occasion during the first part of data collection, I observed a spontaneous discussion. Students had just viewed a Dr. Suess video when a student blurted out, "Is the dude name Whatsler, like I want sumpin' or is it Onceler like one time?" Without hestitating, she clarified that the character's name was Onceler. Terri then complimented the children on their thinking and clarified *again that the Dr. Suess character was Onceler.* Others chimed in, adding details. Terri was a master at making eye contact with each new speaker. It was as if she called on them with her eyes, acknowledging each new voice.

Terri often paused during reading to clarify vocabulary and concepts. One day early on during data collection, I observed during a reading of *The Rats of Nihm.* Terri paused at the word "leeward" asking, "What does that mean, the leeward side of the house?" Numerous students commented aloud, some to her, others to each other. Terri monitored responses and then asked Jake to share his comments. Before Jake spoke, she instructed the class to listen to Jake's answer and see if it matched their own. In such a manner she used student answers to clarify and also redirected attention to the reading of the story.

Delores also read aloud to her students daily. Each day following lunch, she called her students to her carpet square either reading or introducing new books to them. She showed them new books, read the title and asked if anyone had anything to share about the book. She prompted them to look at the book cover. Often, she read the blurb on the back. She then asked for predictions. If she was in the middle of a reading, she began by asking students to tell her what has happened. As Delores read aloud, she too, would pause to ask additional questions and to confirm or dis-confirm prior predictions. She probed with her questions, asking what the class thought of responses or who could add more. Delores frequently repeated student responses as questions, promoting more discussion and emulating Foster's cross speaker antaphora (1994) discussed previously in chapter II.

Delores also used reading response journals with her students. Students write to her about the books they are reading or have read and passing the journals back and forth, she responds to them.

Both teachers use a reading/writing workshop format in their classes. One day, Terri started the large group share of a workshop with a minilesson on how to share. Students had the option to either share a part of a book they were reading by reading a portion aloud or they could read aloud from their own writing. Terri reminded students they had the option of passing. Several did pass as Terri recorded who shared. Omar read aloud from a story he wrote. Several more passed. Candice read her story aloud which was about her birthday party. It contained a lot of dialogue. I noted that Terri has a timer, assuming it is a way to regulate the amount of time students shared. Chloe volunteered to share a story about a hamburger. The story itself was cut into the shape of a burger and followed the same story line as *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* by J. Barnett. Jake shared next. He shared a story he'd written that followed the "fortunately-unfortunately" formula. Having rotated through the class, Terri asked if anyone was interrupted by the timer. Toni raised her hand and shared from a book she was reading yesterday. Shayla was next, and she also read from a *Goosebumps* she was reading the previous day. Ashley was next. She finished sharing a story she wrote. Debra passed, and now it was Dionté's turn. He shared a Clifford book and ended the large-group share. Again, students were given a great deal of freedom of expression within a structured format. Students had clear expectations of the sharing procedure yet were also allowed personal choice about what they chose to share. Terri maximized their verbal skills while at the same time, allowing each individual to voluntarily share.

Another day during the midpoint of the study, Terri conducted book conferences while students read silently during reading workshop time. She called all students' names rapidly and then counted backwards 5-4-3-2-1! They were quiet! As I surveyed the room, I noted that some students were seated at their desks, while some were on carpet squares scattered throughout the room. Anel selected the director's chair. Some students were writing, most were reading. All were very involved and engaged in their literacy choices. Terri proceeded to call students up for conferences. Occasionally she quieted the class with a sh-h-h-ha! I observed Terri and a student, Debra, conference. Terri began by asking Debra if she enjoyed the book. Then she asked if there were any words Debra did not know, assessing Debra's comprehension as well as her reading strategies. She shared with Debra how she figures out words she does not know. Terri offered lots of encouragement as Debra thought aloud about how she approaches unfamiliar words, especially proper nouns. She stressed meaning as she asked Debra, "Does it really matter how to say a character's name? " Terri followed up by asking if not knowing someone's name changes the story. She asked, "Does it make sense?"

Terri also asked Debra if she uses SWAT strategies. She shared that she thought the techniques were really good. She showed Debra how to use a strategy and ended the conference by telling Debra that her book was a "cool book."

These excerpts from field notes illustrate the knowledge each teacher has about the language arts. While reading is a main emphasis in both classrooms, writing is an equally important area where both teachers demonstrated their knowledge. Both use writing workshop formats, allowing a great deal of writing and sharing time which in turn, facilitates talking and listening.

One day during the middle of data collection, I was observing Terri's class when Desiree approached Terri and indicated that she wanted a writing conference. During the conference, Terri probed, asking a lot of "why" questions to help her clarify what Desiree was writing. She added lots of praise like, "That's a good idea," assuring Desiree that she need not worry about spelling. Terri told Desiree that she could read all of her writing. Desiree was visibly pleased, *smiling confidently. At the end of the conference, Terri* handed Desiree something and complimented her further. "This is great!" she exclaimed. "I'd like you to share this when we do a minilesson on Waterloo history." Desiree returned to her seat, full of smiles.

Using student work as models was a regular occurrence in both classrooms. Student writingss were used as demonstrations of what these teachers considered to be good work. Both teachers also allowed students to use the chalk boards in their respective rooms. This too became a demonstration for class members as an individual student could choose to use the chalk board to problem solve while reading and writing. One late afternoon toward the end of my data collection period, I assisted Candice as she struggled to spell *congratulations*. Terri observed us and then intervened. We worked through the word together. I overemphasized the *t*. She stopped at the final *n*. I asked her if she needed an *s* at the end of the word. She repeated the word, *congratulation* several times. "No *s*," she said with conviction. I asked her if she was sure. She replied, "Yeah." At that moment, Terri walked by and paused at board. "Candice," she said, "say *congratulations*." Candice repeated the word hesitantly adding an *s* at the end verbally. Terri asked, "Don't you want an *s* at the end?" Candice looked at the word on the board and adds an s. She left it on the board and returned to her desk. Terri moved on to other students, constantly watching, guiding, praising, commenting, monitoring.

Inventing Pedagogy: Culturally Relevant Decisions

Both Delores Fox and Terri Hall's knowledge of their craft combined with specific knowledge of their students allows them to make culturally relevant decisions in the classroom. In particular, four frequent areas emerged: recognizing students' verbal tendencies, use of antiphonal response, code-switching and acceptance, not correction of student language.

Acknowledging Verbal Nature Among African American Students

Terri and Delores acknowledge the verbal nature of their students, the performance aspect to their language and the playful ways in which they use language. This is evidenced by the use of antiphonal response during instruction by both educators. Quite often, they fall into a pattern of call and response that is highly effective with their classes. They both tolerate a lot of talk and verbal expression. But each teacher also knows when to calm students down and curb verbal play. Each teacher definitely used language as a means of controlling students, but they also capitalized on their students' verbosity and in selective situations, encouraged it. This is the type of knowledge that comes with knowing your students well. The direct, straightforward and to-the-point manner in which they verbally deal with their students reflects their knowledge and acceptance of their students' cultural background.

Both teachers' tolerance for talk in classroom situations indicates their knowledge of their students' cultural orientation, specifically the verbal nature of their African American students. Early during data collection, I was observing in Delores's class while she was reading. Delores began the session by conducting a minilesson on parts of a story. She reviewed characters, setting, plot and events and then introduced a new book, *Little Red Riding Hood: A New Fangled Tale*, by Ernst Campbell to the class. As she showed an illustration from the book, Tyre exclaimed, "She don't have no cheek!" Delores nodded at Tyre and continued reading pausing ever so slightly as DiVonte blurted out, "While she be pickin' flowers, the wo'f be tryin' to trick Li'l Red Ridin' Hood!" Delores asked if other thought that was true, listened to several more responses and then merely nodded while another student asked, "Is they gonna eat those muffins?" Delores responded by asking the class at large if they thought the muffins would be eaten. An impromptu discussion ensued with Delores interrupting students to ask further questions.

On another occasion right before spring break, Delores again demonstrated her acknowledgment of her students' verbal nature by accepting comments called out and using them to her advantage. Delores was disseminating novels to her students, some of whom were asking, "What this?" or, "What that you givin' us?" She reminded them that she had passed out these same books yesterday and they had written questions about the novel, "But..." she mumbled and before she could finish her own thought, she was quickly interrupted by Theodore who shouted out, "They in our journals!" Delores just smiled and complimented Theodore on remembering that they had written questions yesterday. As students settled down to read, Delores started a conversation about what had happened so far in the book. She did not get far before Marcus interrupted her with "He still thinking about..." Sharply Delores exclaimed, "Excuse me!" Marcus stopped immediately and Delores finished her thought. Calling on several students by name, she asked several more questions as a way to review the previous day's read. She then turned back to Marcus who was quite subdued and asked him how he knew the character is sad. Marcus replied, "He hasn't went outside jus' yet." Delores nodded and thanked him for waiting for others to speak. She resumed reading for approximately fifteen minutes before ending.

In mid-April as Delores was reading a suspenseful chapter of *Hatchet* aloud, Marcus shouted out, "He still have a light chance!" Delores nodded and continued to read about the young character in the book who is about to crash land in the Canadian wilderness when Marcus again blurted out, "And he in the air? How come he ain't open up the window?" This time Delores admonished, "Marcus, how come you the only one talking?" The class giggled at the way Delores mimicked Marcus while at the same time chastising him. She proceeded to ask an additional question when Dionte excitedly called out, "I'm the man! I'm the man!" Delores responded with, "Yes, you're the man but you forgot to raise your hand too!" The class erupted in laughter with several students exclaiming, "Oh-h, she got you good!" Delores joined in their laughter and announced that she would continue tomorrow if Marcus and Dionte would let her.

Often students are put into groups where they collaboratively work on problems. In such situations, they are allowed to freely express their ideas and work through solutions together. Customarily, students would sing out as they worked or take up songs with one another, chant, call back and forth, and sometimes, playfully insult one another, using language all the time.

One day in May while the class was in the computer lab, a group of boys in Delores's class started to sing a Boyz to Men song. Andy started to sing as he worked at the key board, "Sorry I never told you, things that I wanted to say..." By the time he had sung the first verse, nearly the entire class had joined in, softly harmonizing, "How can I say good-bye to yesterday." As the song ended, Delores simply said, "Okay!" emphatically and the entire class quieted their singing voices but continued to keyboard. Like the incidents with Tyre, Marcus and Dionte, Delores allowed a great deal of spontaneous verbal expression, but once it was finished, redirected students to their computer keyboarding.

Field notes confirm that Terri also allowed a considerable amount of casual and impulsive verbal expression in her classroom. In March, at the midpoint of data collection, she entered her room following a science lesson taught by another teacher. As she was directing students to take out paper and pencils, Dionte sang out, "Can we water these [plants] right quick?" Terri nodded directly at him while she repeated her request for students to take out paper and pencil. Another incident occurred on chilly April day when Terri and a group of her and Delores's students in the computer lab. Students were working on a slide show as she circulated around the lab. A student called out, "Can I change mines?" Terri asked to no one in particular, "Can you?" Several students responded with "Uh-huhs" and, "She said you could change up." During this same session, Marcus suddenly jumped up, clapped his hands together and executed a few dance steps while exclaiming, "We done, we done, we done!" Terri complimented him on finishing and asked if he could not go watch another student. Marcus went over to Andy and exclaimed loudly, "You done that, ain't you?" Before Andy could reply Terri asserted in a sharp voice, "Marcus, can you watch without talking? Please?" Marcus stood quietly behind Andy for the remaining seven minutes of lab time.

At the end of data collection in May, Terri again indicated her acknowledgment and acceptance of her students' verbal nature. She was reading aloud during social studies instruction from a book about a boy who walked twenty miles in an Iowa winter. "Good Lord!" exclaimed Dionté. Terri paused very so slightly and nodded to him, simultaneously acknowledging the comment while also indicating its inappropriateness.

By recognizing cultural and incorporating and utilizing it in the classroom, both teachers indicated their ability to make culturally relevant decisions by tolerating, allowing and in certain instances, encouraging spontaneous verbal responses while teaching. Acknowledging verbalness is just one way these two educators made such relevant decisions.

Using Antiphonal Response

In addition to recognizing, validating and incorporating the very verbal nature of their students' language abilities in the classroom, both teachers also included a great deal of antiphonal response in their teaching. As the majority of African American students in these two classrooms have strong church ties, mainly to Southern Missionary Baptist and

African Methodist Episcopal (AME) churches, these students were also very familiar and comfortable with call and response. Both educators incorporated call and response methods during instruction. For instance, one day in February Delores was calling out spelling words. She called out the word and then asked for a volunteer to spell the word. As each volunteer spelled his or her word, she immediately asked the class, "Is that right?" In unison, her class responded. If the answer was correct, I heard "yeahs!" and "uh-huhs." As she worked through the list of words, a pattern developed and a rhythm emerged. The entire class became involved in judging each volunteer's response and in responding appropriately, in unison. When the list was completed, the class exploded into enthusiastic "all rights" and "yeahs." Some students even jumped to their feet and gestured, raising their hands above their heads. It was apparent that this type of response was familiar and known to her students.

Another time in late April, Delores was beginning a computer lab writing session. As a way to review some computer functions, she began the session by asking a rapid-fire list of questions. After each question, students responded in unison. The exchange was,

Do you remember how to tab?	Yeah!
Do you remember how to cut?	Yeah!

Do you remember how to paste?	Yeah!
Do you remember how to copy?	Yeah!
Do you remember how to save?	Yeah!
Then let's get started!	Yeah!

Yet another time, Delores employed call and response before an editing exercise in the classroom. Her questions included,

When do I capitalize?

At the beginning! and Proper nouns!

When do I indent?

New paragraph!

What goes at the end of a sentence?

Punctuation!

When do you use a comma?

When you pause (some said breathe)!

What if I can't spell a word?

Invent it or, Guess or, Aks somebody!

In each instance, her questions were met with a unified response from the students. During such exchanges, I noticed that students were involved, united and connected in their responses. It was as if the call and response patterns she established heightened their attention to her actual questions and increased their comprehension.

Delores often utilized a call and response pattern when she finished giving directions. She frequently ended a set of directions by calling out, "Are you with me?" and students answered, "yeah!" or she'd call out, "Everybody with me?" and students responded, "Uh-huh!"

Terri also utilized call and response, although not as frequently as Delores, perhaps because this pattern of verbal interaction was not as familiar to her as a White person as it was to Delores as an African American and a member of a local Missionary Baptist Church.

Terri often worked through a given series of statements, omitting the final word which students supply a unified antiphonal response. She too, asked a series of questions related to a topic and established a call and response pattern with her students. For instance, while studying Native Americans in May, she initiated a type of call and response, "You only take what you _______..." Students responded in unison, "Need!" That same day Terri ended her reading by stating, "Violence begets violence." A student responded with an, "Amen!" followed by several students who replied, "Uh-huh," and, "You tell it!"

Although the cadences Terri established were not as pronounced as Delores's, she was still effective in that students paid closer attention to the material while she employed this practice. Because call and response was a culturally familiar communication pattern, concentrating on the rhythm as well as the correctness of responses increased students' attention and awareness.

Code-switching

Code-switching is the ability to move between different languages or variant forms of a language (Grosjean, 1982). Keith Walters (1991) believes that teachers of African American students must acknowledge and validate students' home language, in this case Black English, while at the same time they promote standard English competency and proficiency. Walters's views are put into practice at Carver by both Delores and Terri. Both educators recognize that language is a unifier. Language binds groups together. It is a social fabric that ties the individual to the group (Walters, 1991). During our second interview in May, Terri defined what she calls Black English. Her response was deliberate and pensive.

> I kind of see Black English as a dialect, and I think we need to validate it. We need to help kids understand that it's okay to have two languages. I do believe that all of our students do need to learn standard English simply because the business world is not going to turn upside down in terms of understanding. If all students know is their dialect they aren't going to be accepted in places like Wall Street. We do a disservice to our students if we don't teach them standard English. But there are times in teaching when I use Black English. There are lots of times when I can let the kids know that Black English is important and valuable.

Both Delores and Terri communicate with their students, they observe their students while they are using language, and they have made it a point to get to know their students. In Terri's case, she has made it a priority to gain an understanding of her African American students' cultural background. Both teachers are aware of the implications of their own understanding about African American cultural knowledge, values and language in terms of classroom pedagogy. What often distinguishes successful teachers from unsuccessful teachers is their attitudes toward their students (Dillard, 1972; Hale-Benson, 1986; Labov, 1972). Both Delores and Terri say they cherish their students and their students' language. They view the Black English spoken by many of their African American students at Carver as a distinct language that reflects their students' cultural distinction from the White mainstream culture of schools. They accept different languages as valid forms of communication. Delores and Terri seek out ways to build on the language skills and abilities their students bring to school. Even though it is crucial to students' success to teach all students the "power" language of our society, standard English, it is equally important to keep home language and usage alive.

> I've got some students who use a lot of, that use heavy, what some call Black English. I think it's a little more difficult for them. They basically come to school and have to learn a new language. I think that makes it harder. Not that I don't have some students that are doing that.. They are doing fine.
>
> I think of DeShawn. He may use what some call a lot of dialect, but he also is a good student. He just has more to do. More to learn than other kids. Simply put, he's got more to learn in the same amount of time. He's a pretty good student, his reading and writing. Yet, I've seen other, like Chloe, who I think uses about the same amount of dialect, who is absolutely struggling.

> And I don't think her struggle has anything directly to do with her dialect. She also has some learning disabilities we need to address. For some of my students [who speak Black English] it seems to make no difference and for some it does. There are more factors than just a language difference.

Delores believes in validating home languages. She is careful to point out that she, too, believes that acquiring standard English is an essential skill her students need to possess. She explained her position by sharing a personal anecdote.

> I know that because when I went to school some teachers didn't know what I was talking about. White students didn't know what I was talking about. I guess I really never gave it a second thought until I went to college. And I went to college, and I met Carl (Delores's former husband). His comment to me about my speech was, "Why do you front?"
>
> And I said, "What are you talking about."
>
> And he said, "When you get around White people you talk a different way. When you get around me you talk..."
>
> "Oh!" I said, "You have to know where I come from. I went to school and the majority of folks I looked at were White people. And when I said, Are you fixing' to... And they're going huh? And about the third time you said it they are still going, huh? You get tired of explaining what you mean so you learn to say... I'm getting ready to or I'm about to."
>
> And I told him, "You hang around Central College long enough and y'all know what I mean." And he did. He'd tell me, "They [White people] don't know what I'm talking about when I say I'm fittin' to.... (I'm fixin' to...)"
>
> You learn as Black person to change it. To change your speech.

Delores has realized for quite some time that certain situations called for certain ways to speak. She is diglossic, meaning she changes her language in response to different audiences and situations (Dillard, 1972). She continued her story about her and Carl's language discussions.

> He didn't understand the need to switch, and I wasn't totally conscious of it. It was just a part of me. My high school reflected college. There were about twenty Black students total in both situations. I didn't have any Black teachers in high school. I had one Black teacher when I was in junior high, one out of all the teachers I had through school. So when you go to say something to someone, after about the thousandth time, you just learn how to say it so that they understand it or you just get tired of explaining it all the time, so I just learned to 'switch' (code-switch) and I'm sure all my brothers and sisters probably did the same thing. But he [Carl, her ex-husband] didn't understand that because he went to an all-Black high school. He probably had some White instructors but he probably had more Black instructors.
>
> And when he got out and got around White people, he came to Central Community College in Pella, Iowa, but his community was still Black, he lived in Watts. How many White folks you know live in Watts? So, there wasn't any need for him to in Watts. He learned how to do it because he had to at Central. I remember telling him, you'll find out.
>
> I'll never forget when I was student teaching in Newton. It was a first grade and a second grade next to each other. It was first grade, we were doing reading groups. I made the mistake of saying run incorrectly. It was something like I run, they run and I said Tom run instead of Tom runs. And my supervisor was there that day. No matter how good the rest of the lesson was, because I had used run that way, she pointed that out to me and told me I needed to go to the university's remediation speech lab or something. Now, SHE needed to go there because she might have used one word incorrectly.

Terri, whose experience with code-switching is tied to her teaching experience at Carver, has a more recent awareness of code-switching. She shares an experience she had that was similar to Delores's experiences with Carl.

> I had a friend I went to high school with, she works at a travel agency and I needed to call during recess. I had kids in my room, so I had them put their heads down, I got the phone and pulled it into my room. Well as I was talking and at some point the students were supposed to have their heads down and I said to them put your heads down. No one listened to me so I said something like, "Y'all put your heads down now!"
>
> And my friend, she said to me, "You sound Black!"
>
> I said, "I hope you don't have a problem with that. There are times when I speak to my students in their language, it gets their attention."
>
> When I got off the phone I realized I was really kind of PO-ed about it. It just made me angry. She is still in that kind of community in Central Heights where she's never had any dealings with anyone of any other culture. The couple of Black students we did have when I was in school acted and talked more White than a lot of the White kids. They walked and talked and acted how some people would say White. They were affluent. They never let us see any side of them that reflected their culture.
>
> This person who was saying this to me, I almost felt as if she were accusing me or something! Or judging me. It really angered me.

Perhaps one of the most powerful and seemingly unconscious demonstrations both teachers provide in the classroom is their own ability to code-switch. Delores code-switches when she is irritable or angry with students or just plain tired. She code-switches for emphasis and accentuation. When she does code-switch, she also raises her voice considerably. Once in February, at the onset of data collection, I observed Delores during a math class. Students were working math problems while Delores kept score using bowling rules. At some point, a few students confused strikes with spares. Laughing Delores exclaimed, "Y'all wanna change the rules of bowlin'!"

Another day, she became very irritated at Andy, a student who was distractible and often off-task. She exclaimed as he was playing in his desk while the others were reading quietly, "Whach you doin'?" In this case, she totally omitted the verb are and her ending [t] became a [ch]. Her voice tone clearly conveyed her exasperation. On other occasions I clearly heard her say, "What are you doing?" Delores also seemed to code-switch to add emphasis to what she is saying. One late afternoon, I observed Delores exclaim, "I 'on't care!" when a student complained about another student's behavior.

Delores also code-switches when she becomes very excited and involved in her teaching of literature. One day, during a particularly animated discussion of a rather poignant scene in *Blueberries for Sal*, Delores switched into Black English as she paraphrased the words of a character who wanted young neighborhood boys to stay off her grass. Delores exclaimed that a character, Mrs. Hauser, says, "Don't be in my yard!" When Delores is really excited she has a tendency to use the phrase, "Y'all" regularly.

Terri also code-switched in the classroom for emphasis, especially when she was angry at student behavior. I frequently heard Terri make statements such as, "Don't be doin' that!" when students would misbehave such as grabbing at each other or swatting back and forth. Once when she was chastising a student for inappropriate remarks and he promised not to repeat his behavior, Terri blurted out, "How do I be sure?"

Terri, like Delores, uses Black English as a way to emphasize what she is saying, and as a way to manage behaviors. And like Delores, she has a propensity to code-switch when she is angry at misbehavior. I gained an idea both teachers have a great tendency to drop final consonant sounds, especially final [g] when upset and angry at their students.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Cazden (1996) writes that her personal knowledge of language allows her to make informed decisions in the classroom. Delpit (1995) believes that teachers must recognize that the language a child brings to school is closely tied to their family, community and personal identity. This is the essence of the issue for me that language is a cultural marker. Being teachers at Carver shaped Delores and Terri's perspectives. They realize that Carver is unique, and that the two of them do not function in opposition to teachers' beliefs at Carver or the culture of the school in general.

Delores articulated her belief that Carver is very different from what both teachers consider to be the norm in other Waterloo schools.

> One of the reasons Carver is different is because of the student body make-up, we were all forced to take a look at our attitudes. A lot of the teachers had to look at their expectations and biases. Maybe my expectations weren't very high, I looked at Black students and didn't expect from them what I might expect from the same type of White students on the west side of town. Those teachers here didn't like it when Dr. Hale [Janice Benson-Hale] came to town, they didn't like it when [African American intellectual leader, Jawanza] Kunjufu came.
>
> But they had to listen. At least they had to be in the room and maybe just by being there, they were forced to take a look at their ideas and some of their issues. They didn't like it when Dr. Howard.... not our staff, but a lot of the Waterloo Community School teachers, didn't like what Dr. Howard had to say. Some were down right belligerent. It would have been much worse if administrators had not been in the audience.
>
> When Kunjufu came here there were teachers in the audience that didn't like the fact that we were dealing with the issue that black males fail more often.

Both women were uncharacteristically quiet during this stretch of our initial interview. Terri offered a reflective comment.

> Yeah, I guess I hadn't really thought about it but that is when my education about diversity first took place. That's when I started to see things the way they are. I was pretty new then. That was my first year...

Eager to convey her thoughts, Delores picked up where Terri trailed off. She leaned forward, her voice full of passion.

> That was one of the reasons things here [at Carver] turned the corner. I'd have to say if he hadn't come and we didn't hear him and Dr. Hale, things might have stayed the same here at Carver.

Having established through data analysis that both educators acknowledge the verbal nature of their students, use antiphonal response as an instructional tool, and speak Black English and code-switching in front of their students, both teachers provide another powerful demonstration. They accept approximations.

Accepting Approximations

With regard to the issue of code-switching, both educators perceive that part of their job is to teach students as much as they can about standard English usage. However, when dealing with African American students who almost exclusively speak Black English, both teachers employ the technique of accepting approximations. Brian Cambourne (1988) theorizes that if the conditions of immersion, demonstration, expectation, responsibility and use exist, approximation occurs. Learners must be free to approximate as they go back and forth between languages. "*Mistakes* are essential for learning to happen" (Cambourne, 1988, p. 33). Specifically, Delores and Terri accept students' language uttered in Black English and respond in standard English.

> There are times in teaching when it is appropriate to correct kids' language. And then there are times when I don't correct them. For example, Arnold in my classroom

> always says Is you, Is you going to do something ? He was talking to me and he said Is you... I said Is you? How about Are you? And he simply said, okay, Are you and he proceeded to ask me the question. But I don't know. I don't remember growing up saying Is you at my house, but I also know that I speak Black English.

One day when DiVonte asked Delores, "Do we supposed to...?" Delores replied by restating DiVonte's question into her answer. She responded to him, "You are supposed to....." gently offering corrective feedback but never overtly correcting his Black English. On other occasions, Delores simply answered questions in standard English that were posed to her in Black English. When DiVonte asked about Little Red Riding Hood, he stated, "While she be pickin' flowers the wolf be tryin' to trick Li'l Red Ridin' Hoot." Delores simply agreed with his response, never correcting his choice of words or pattern of speech.

Similar to Delores, Terri used the same technique of approximation, accepting Black English but not correcting it. In the five months I spent in Terri's class, I never heard her overtly correct Black English usage. I only observed her responding in standard English or, as with the case of Candice writing on the board, she would simply ask a student to repeat what they had said and draw attention to their language.

Both teachers' acceptance, acknowledgment and validation of their students' language was an avenue for them to extend and integrate their students' discourse patterns into the school culture. They invent pedagogy as they recognize students' verbal tendencies, use antiphonal response during instruction, code-switching between standard English and Black English and accept, not correct students' language.

During the sixteen weeks of data collection, I visited Carver a total of forty-one times. Data analysis indicates that there were eighty-seven incidences of both teachers employing a direct teaching style with students, including eighteen times when I observed and recorded teachers' acknowledgment of the verbal nature of their students. I also noted thirty-seven incidences of teacher code-switching, thirty-two occurrences of antiphonal response and twenty events where the two educators accepted approximations. I made no distinction between the teachers when I tallied the rate of these occurrences.

Both Delores and Terri know their students, they care about them as individuals, they recognize language and cultural differences, and they demonstrate their knowledge of and concerns for their students in ways that students understand. They have invented a classroom culture that reflects the make up of their students.

The Focal Students

At the heart of this research issue are the students themselves. After the second month of data collection, I began to focus on students by selecting six target students from each classroom. I soon realized that twelve students was too many. With the help of both Delores and Terri, I sifted through data about these twelve students winnowing my choice to four focal students, two boys from Delores's class and two girls from Terri's classroom. All four students were enrolled in fifth grade during the 1996-97 school year. The following sections provide a portrait of the four focal students focusing on their language and their teachers' perceptions of them as students. The final section, entitled Marcus, is an in-depth portrait of one focal student who is exemplary of a Black child from Waterloo's African American community.

Chloe

At the time of this study Chloe was eleven years old and in fifth grade. She is tall and dark-skinned. Chloe usually sits up front in her classrooms. She struggles with school. She was a Title I client of mine as a second grader and continues to experience difficulty with school. Chloe is usually a very quiet girl and is somewhat nervous; she frequently bites her nails. She is, however, socially confident and seems to move easily between the fourth and fifth grade girls. She dresses stylishly and tries out many different hairstyles. One day she is dressed in blue denim jeans, a long-sleeved black tee-shirt and a matching denim vest, a typical outfit for her. She proudly wears two gold chains.

Chloe exclusively speaks Black English at school, in the classroom, in the lunchroom and on the playground. Her language includes a tendency to reduce, omit or simplify final consonant clusters, dropping final [l] or [r], dropping the final [g] in words ending with [ing], deleting initial unstressed syllables, producing [f] for [th], omitting past tense markers, plural markers and possessive markers, irregular use of be, omitting the verb is and irregular subject verb agreement.

Chloe speaks Black English as her home language. Her younger siblings sound just like her as does her mother who does not work outside the home.

Chloe was born in Waterloo, Iowa, and has spent little time outside of the Waterloo area. Her exposure to standard English comes from school and the media. She rarely uses standard English and has great difficulty with school practices such as Daily Oral Language (DOL) exercises. When I interviewed Chloe about changing her language depending on where she was or who she was talking to, she claimed that she never changes her language, but she acknowledged that her language gets corrected frequently by certain individuals.

> I get corrected a lot like by Mr. Sallis and my auntie. I said, "Is we goin' to run the track?" Mr. Sallis told me say it different. I don' like that.

Mr. Sallis, who is African American, is the physical education teacher at Carver. His perspective on correctness of language illustrates the range of opinions regarding language diversity that exist (Turner, 1996; Wyatt, 1995), especially within Black communities.

The following samples of Chloe's language were documented during observations and interviews conducted for this study. They illustrate her language. During initial interviews, I asked Chloe to tell me about herself and her family. Her responses indicate the features of Black English which exist in her speech.

> Chloe my name.
> I stay wit' my mom, my mom boyfrien' and my brother and sister.
> I like goin' to my grandmother house.

I asked Chloe questions about why and when she reads and writes. Again, her speech patterns were discernible and reflected her speech as Black English.

> I like to pic' the books to read.
> If I don' got nuyhin' to do and I is bore', I read.
> Cause I like t' read.
> Mz. Fox, she have us t' work wit' a partner.
> We always got t' put our head down 'cause we be talkin'.
> She m' cousin.

Interview data from Terri and Delores corroborate my conclusions about Chloe and my view of her language. Delores's observations confirmed my perspective that Chloe does not code-switch depending on situations and contexts.

> I would say that Chloe uses the language she hears the most often around her. It doesn't matter if she is with friends or teachers, her language stays the same. When you ask her to say something different or if there is another way to say something, she has a difficult time switching. For instance she always asks a question of me saying, "Is you...?" If I repeat her own question

> and I say Is you... she doesn't understand, like many other students do, that I want her to say that question differently, in a more standard fashion. I rarely do that, but when I do, the majority of my students who speak Black English code-switch. Chloe just has a difficult time code-switching.

Terri confirmed both my observations and Delores's about Chloe's language choices and difficulty code-switching.

> Chloe is a really interesting child. She's hard for me to understand. In the beginning of the year I had to ask her to repeat a lot. I always tried not to overstep my bounds and not make her feel uncomfortable about her speech. With a lot of students, if I stop and ask them to repeat themselves in standard English, they always let me know that they can do that. I'm personally not concerned with those students; Chloe cannot code-switch. I am greatly concerned about her, her success in school and her future.

Accepting approximations is part of both Delores and Terri's philosophical stance and their pedagogy. Yet both women also recognize the importance of acquiring what Delpit terms "codes of power" or standard English acquisition. They illustrate Delpit's beliefs about correction. It is obvious by Chloe's own words that a particular teacher in her building who constantly corrects her is one she dislikes. "Forcing speakers to monitor their language for rules while speaking, typically produces silence. Correction may also affect students' attitudes toward their teachers" (Delpit, 1995, p. 51).

Desiree

Desiree is also eleven years old and in fifth grade. She is a very stylish, neat girl. She usually wears her hair up in a ponytail on top of her head. She wears fashionable clothes such as a sweatsuit top and a pair of light-colored denim jeans with black Nike tennis shoes. She is a polite child, respectful of adults and others. She waits her turn to speak, appears willing to share information with others, seems self-motivated, and is conscientious about assignments. Desiree is a Waterloo native.

I initially rejected Desiree as a focal student after conducting a target interview with her. After the target interview, I shared with Terri and Delores that I thought that her language was very standard. They both laughed. Terri claimed Desiree is one of the students whose language is occasionally difficult for her to understand. Delores felt Desiree was an excellent code-switcher. Delores had told me to listen to her on the playground and at lunch. I did. And, afterwards, based on her ability to code-switch, I selected her as a focal student.

Desiree is an excellent student. During interviews she shared with me that she values her education. She frequently spoke of her mother who works in retail at a local, up-scale department store. Desiree tells me that her mother "corrects" her language frequently and admonishes her for speaking slang. For Desiree, correction from her mother shapes her language choices.

> My mom be trying to get me to talk proper. She use to work at the bank and now she work at Herbergers (an upscale department store). She tells me she hafta talk different at work than at home.

When Desiree initially spoke with me, she used standard English, but at lunch and on the playground she uses Black English. When with her peers, she displayed the following features of Black English: she reduces and deletes final consonants, weakens many final consonants, drops the final [g] in [ing] words, displays an absent plural marker occasionally and sometimes uses an irregular subject-verb agreement. In class and when observed speaking with adults, she usually code-switches into standard English.

Compared to Chloe, Desiree is more successful in school and uses less Black English, even when with her peers. Desiree's mother's influence shapes her language. A prime example is when she first talked to me. Because I am White, she spoke standard English with me. When I first interviewed her and asked her about her family, she gave the following answers.

> I live with my mom and brothers and sisters.
> My step sister, she is older. My brothers and sisters are younger.

Later, as Desiree warmed up to me, she switched into Black English more often. During subsequent interviews, her answers reflected her ability to code-switch into Black English. Further question about her family elicited the following responses.

> I'm kinda in the mi'le of my family.
> I got li'le brother and sisters and I got o'der stepsisters.

I also asked Desiree questions about school, reading and writing. Her initial responses were either "yes" or "no." She did not elaborate or offer specifics or details. Later on when I probed further about her literacy interests, her responses again reflected her ability to code-switch into Black English. As she became comfortable with me, she used Black English as evidenced by the following replies.

> I like t' read mysteries or dis plain ol' books or poetry.
> It was abou' this girl and she be talkin' abou' her family.
> A boy in the story want some kinda animal but there ain't no way!
> The character think they allergic to they family.
> Jus' any o'd kin'.
> Prob'ly bof.
> I'm kinda like a person that wanna be drawin' stuff.

Delpit suggests that "people acquire a new dialect most effectively through interaction with speakers of that dialect, not through being constantly corrected" (1995, p. 11). Desiree's mother code-switches and through her daughter, articulates why she changes her speech. Desiree hears this at home and she hears standard English at school from her teachers and some peers. As a result, she too code-switches her language based on situational factors. Terri, who has Desiree in her room for all but two periods of the day, confirms that Desiree code-switches depending on her audience and depending on context.

> I would say that [Desiree] is really good at code-switching. She is able to chat with her friends in one language and then chat with adults in another. When we

> are sitting in class just talking informally, me sitting with students around me, that's when I notice her ability to code-switch. She is a super student. It's neat for me to listen to her and her language.

DiVonte

DiVonte is eleven and in fifth grade. He was born and raised in Waterloo. DiVonte is very easy-going. He speaks slowly and he moves slowly; he never hurries. He dresses in the uniform of his peers, over-size tee-shirts and baggy jeans with signature tennis shoes. DiVonte enjoys school.

DiVonte's mother, Elma, was student of mine at a local university where I was an adjunct from time-to-time. She is a teacher associate within the Waterloo system and is studying to be a teacher. DiVonte reports that she "corrects" his language at home.

With his peers and with me, DiVonte speaks Black English. He regularly reduces or deletes final consonant clusters, he deletes the [g] in words ending in [ing], he either omits a past tense marker or he doubles it, he does not use either a plural or possessive marker, he displays irregular verb usage and zero copula, he habitually uses be irregularly. Subject-verb agreement is also irregular. DiVonte did not switch his language when speaking with or around me except for when we first met. At our initial target interview he introduced himself, "My name DiVonte Allen." He paused ever so slightly and repeated himself, adding an [s] to name, stating, "My name's DiVonte Allen..."

> DiVonte actively code-switches, especially when he writes. During writing revisions, he reads his writing aloud, frequently stopping to reread and add endings to words even though he does not voice those endings during self-correction. DiVonte recognizes a need to use standard English when writing, but doesn't appear to feel it is necessary when speaking. During informal conversations about his writing and his interests, DiVonte exclusively spoke Black English. These samples illustrate his Black English usage.

> I gotta write me a new story.
> De we suppos' t' do that?
> She already know!
> I go over t' my cousin house an' we ride bikes.
> I likes it better when I kin pic' what I wan'.
> I go coon huntin' wit' my dat.

In addition to questions about his home life, interests and school, I asked DiVonte specific questions about language differences. His responses indicate that he is very aware of language as a cultural marker and that he has a very accepting attitude toward language and cultural differences. The following is a transcript excerpt from a focal interview with DiVonte.

> MMS: Do Black and White kids talk different at Carver?
> D: Yeah, like a White kid, he come up and say, "Hi" and a Black kids say, "What up?" Sometime people want to talk our language and we laugh and some people make fun of 'em. They wannabes.
> MMS: Anybody ever make fun of how you talk?
> D: No. It okay wit me for a White kid to talk like me. It fine. Other kids, they say, "He jus' wanna be Black! Try to do like we do."
> MMS: What if you went home and talked like me around your friends? What would they say?
> D: What wrong wit' you? Why you talkin' like that?

Although DiVonte can code-switch and he is aware of conventions and contexts that demand different language varieties, he essentially speaks Black English. Terri confirmed this as she stated,

> I haven't witnessed a lot of code-switching on his part. If I ask him to say something he has said in Black English differently, and again, I don't do that a lot, he can code-switch to standard English. But he speaks Black English all the time.

Delores noted the same speech pattern of Black English but states that "DiVonte speaks Black English and writes fairly standard English. Vocabulary is average although he likes to use spelling words when he writes." Field notes confirmed DiVonte's use of spelling words as he writes stories during writing workshop time. During his focal interview in April, I asked him to show me his writing folder. Willingly, he pulled one out announcing, "Dis was a long story. Look! "Oh my gosh,"" I responded, "it's four pages!" I read the story he offered me, stopping to comment on his word choice, "That's a great word, missive, where'd you hear that?" Spellin' list. I likes to use spellin' words when writin'.

Terri wrapped up our interview time spent discussing DiVonte stating, "His mechanics are okay and he has a tendency like many of his classmates to use run-on sentences. He can easily express himself."

Like Desiree, DiVonte's mother actively code-switches and does so because she works with the public in a job that takes her outside of the home. His mother and his teachers provide him with demonstrations. Like Desiree, he is able to code-switch but does not in front of adults like she does. Even though he can code-switch, like Chloe, he only speaks Black English at school.

Marcus

Marcus, which is short for his full name, DeMarcus, is just ten years old. He is considerably shorter than DiVonte, Chloe and Desiree. He has shaved hair and a short, round face. He is very animated when he speaks, using a great deal of expression. He uses his hands a lot to convey his message. Marcus is extremely verbal; his language is very performance-oriented. He uses language to inform, control, ritualize and to problem solve. He is also very fashion-conscious. Marcus wears two rings, expensive-looking clothes and name brand Nike Air tennis shoes.

Of the four focal students, Marcus is the only one not born in Waterloo. He was born in Rosedale, Mississippi, and spends his summers there with his father. He resides with his mother, Aunt Sheila and cousins; his grandmother also resides in Waterloo, providing him with a loving, supportive, extended family. Marcus is very self-confident.

Terri just shook her head when I asked her to describe Marcus and his language. Smiling, she said,

> Oh man! I would say that Marcus does a fair amount of code-switching, and because he was born in Mississippi, he always uses a certain amount of southern slang. He says things in a certain way that seems different from a lot of other Black kids at Carver.

Delores's description of Marcus focuses on his expressive, verbal nature.

> Marcus is very verbal and very articulate. He expresses himself very well, both written and verbal expression. He has an interesting way of putting things together. He has a great vocabulary. Of the four focals, I'd say that Marcus pretty much understands the best of all that standard English is supposed to be spoken at school. Marcus not only understands, he can code-switch fairly easily.

Marcus has a very clear sense of himself. While Chloe is shy and hangs back, and Desiree is soft-spoken and quiet and DiVonte simply laid-back and easy-going, Marcus is a verbal volcano. He erupts in the classroom and playground. Often the center of attention and activity, Marcus rules his universe, engaging language as a powerful tool of communication. He is very social and employs language as social activity. He successfully uses language to negotiate his worlds, the African American culture into which he was born, the world of Carver and the White mainstream culture of American schools.

In terms of his language, Marcus consistently uses Black English but is easily able to articulate why and when he code-switches. To my ears, his Black English sounds decidedly more southern; his dialect more pronounced. Marcus deletes his final consonants and consonant clusters, he drops his final [l] and [r] in words on a consistent basis, he totally omits the final [g] in words ending in [ing], he pronounces [f] for [th] in word endings and medial placements and he voices [d] for initial [th] sounds. Marcus also pronounces words quite differently than his focal peers. His intonational variation is much more pronounced. He either omits past tense markers or he doubles the tense marker, he omits both plural and possessive markers and his verb usage is irregular as is his subject-verb agreement and his use of _be_. He uses _ain't_ for _isn't_, _haven't_ and _don't_ on a regular basis, at least much more consistently than other focal students.

Although Marcus's language is almost exclusively Black English, he is able to clarify reasons for code-switching in a highly articulate manner. Like most of the students in his classroom, he is exceedingly verbal, frequently engaging in verbal play exchanges with his peers. He is also an able reader and a skilled writer. His literacy skills serve him well.

The verbal nature and the performance aspect of Marcus's speaking mark him as typical of his peers and of the focal students included in this study. His associations to Mississippi mark him as a typical member of Waterloo's Black Community. Although he does not typically code-switch when speaking, he is the most able of all focal students to articulate when and why someone might code-switch. This knowledge is perhaps why he is successful in school. He applies this knowledge in his reading and writing and receives high marks for his efforts.

When I specifically questioned Marcus about language and culture difference, he was quick to answer me.

> Okay, I think Black people talk more 'xpressively. We say words like ain't a lot more than Whites, use more slang talk. Some people they act stuck up about the way they talk. 'Nother thing I notice is I think I talk normal cuz that how I talk!

I also questioned Marcus about whether or not his mother corrected his speech. He rolled his eyes, shook his head from side-to-side and exclaimed,

> All the time! Like I say, "Ain't we goin' over there?" And she say, "Aren't we..." 'Nother 'xample. Like I say, "Huh?" and my mom, she say, "The word is yes or no."

So I asked Marcus what would happen if he went home and talked like me. He grinned and replied, "My mom, she'd love it. She think I use a lot of slang. Sometime she tell me to talk proper."

I questioned Marcus whether talking proper was the same as talking White. Emphatically he responded, "No, no, no! Not at all! There are a lot of White people that talk like me."

I also asked Marcus if he was aware that he changed up or switched his language. The articulate and insightful answer he gave me was again, a surprise to me. I assumed Marcus's Mississippi roots would provide him with a narrow view of language difference. He displayed an understanding that surpassed his ten young years.

> Yeah. I have to switch. I think it's like when you have different friends like I do, Black and White, you treat 'em differently, talk to 'em differently because of their color. That's what I do. When I'm with all Black kids, I talk the way I naturally do. When I'm with White kids, I talk more like them. Let me give you 'nother 'xample. When I'm at home, that what I call Mississippi, I talk like that. I get asked by folks down there why I talk like I do. So I change to be like them.

Marcus's language samples are more extensive as I spent more time focused on him. His samples illustrate his language. One day, while Delores was reading aloud from *Hatchet*, Marcus yelled out, "He gonna die! He gonna die!" Delores ignored his first outburst, rewarding him with a long stare. As she continued to read a segment of the book where the plane crashes, without a prompt or invitation from the teacher, Marcus announced to the class, "The pilot, he in da air!" Exasperated at his verbal barrage, Delores raised the volume of her voice and effectively over rode his talking. While she recognizes his verbal nature, she frequently had to stymie his expressiveness.

Marcus's knowledge of code-switching, the "hows" and "whys" of when to use a specific language intrigued me. In light of his continued strong ties to kin in Mississippi and his tendency to language classify some Black English as "country," Marcus emerges as a surprise in this study. Because he was born in Mississippi and spends significant amounts of time there, I assumed his language would primarily be Black English. I further assumed that he would not code-switch much at all. Conversely, Marcus code-switches more frequently than any of the other focal students. Both Delores and Terri confirm this.

A unique set of conditions allows Marcus to fit into the differing language worlds to which he belongs. His close, extended family has instilled in him a strong sense of who he is as a young African American male. His ties to his culture, especially his rural, southern culture, remain solid and resolute. He is also lucky that he attends Carver in Waterloo, Iowa, where he is surrounded by a community that supports and maintains his culture. Marcus has two professional educators who espouse a philosophy and possess teaching styles that allow Marcus to "make that leap" educationally and "fit" into both worlds. His teachers' knowledge of language and children and learning allow them to invent a pedagogy that is specific to Marcus's language needs. Most importantly, these two teachers recognize the social aspect of Marcus, his language and his cultural ties. For Marcus, literacy happens successfully in a school called Carver, in a town called Waterloo, because he has two educators who care about him as an individual, unique person. They recognize that he must navigate his world.

All focal students selected for this study are African American and speak Black English; however, illustrating the

Table 15. Variability of Selected Features of Black English Spoken by Focal Students

	Chloe	DiVonte	Desiree	Marcus
Code-switching Ability	NO	S	S	X
Black English Phonology				
reduces, simplifies, deletes final consonants; final consonant clusters	X	X	X	X
weakens final consonants; disappearing glottal stops	X	X	X	X
drops final l or r	X	X	X	X
drops final g in ing words	X	X	X	X
voices initial th as d	NO	S	NO	X
deletes initial unstressed syllables	X	S	S	X
produces f for th	X	S	S	X
intonational variation	X	S	S	X
Black English Grammar				
absent past tense marked	X	X	S	X
absent plural s marker	S	X	X	X
absent possessive s marker	S	S	NO	X

Table 15 continued

Code-switching Ability	Chloe	DiVonte	Desiree	Marcus
	NO	S	S	X
irregular verb usage	X	X	S	X
zero copula	X	X	NO	X
subject-verb agreement	X	X	X	X
irregular, habitual use of be	X	X	S	X
long term duration	X	X	S	X
use of ain't for hasn't, isn't, haven't, and don't	X	S	NO	X

to selected features of Black English found in Table 11 located in chapter IV. If a feature was present one to three times, I labeled it with an S (sometimes). If a feature was present four or more times, I classified it as an X (frequent). If the feature was never present in the students' language samples collected, I ranked it NO (not observed).

Conclusion

Terri Hall and Delores Fox demonstrate a responsibility toward the children they teach. They are passionate and committed to their craft, and they see it as their

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responsibility to prepare their children for the future. In regard to their views on preparing children at Carver Elementary in Waterloo, Iowa, to enter a global world, Delores asks a burning question, "How many places are you gonna be able to go to in the future where everyone shares the same culture?"

She answers her own question quietly and with a sort of tired determination.

> Some day it'll just be nice not to have to worry, "Is this an issue because I'm Black or is this just an issue?" I'm so tired of dealing with it. I'm tired of dealing with it when I go talk to my kids' teachers, I'm tired of dealing with it when I talk to some parents here, I get tired of dealing with it when I hear a lot of older Black folk from Mississippi that say things so different from me. It took me a while to figure it out.

Delores shrugs her shoulders at her own questions and answers. She lets Terri ask, "Why does race have to be such a big deal?"

Delores then responds with a statement that sort of sums up what both she and Terri and Belinda Jackson and Vanessa Carson Hart have been saying. "Teachers need to understand those differences. It's a sensitivity issue. Teachers need to understand their students. They need to be aware of what is being said."

The students selected as focal students for this study were fortunate that they were assigned to two honest, sensitive and accepting teachers. The students signify many things. They are all Black-English speakers, possessing a

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variety of Black English speech patterns. If these four students can be considered a sampling of African Americans enrolled in these two classes, they exemplify the range of language that may exist within any Black English-speaking community.

The final chapter of this study presents conclusions and implications for teaching. It is the essence of inventing culturally relevant pedagogy.

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CHAPTER VII

INVENTING CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY

> Children, no matter what their style, fail primarily because of systematic inequities in delivery of any pedagogical approach.
>
> Asa G. Hilliard III (1989)

In this final chapter, I share interpretations of the layers of the nesting design, specifically how students like Marcus benefit when teachers like Delores and Terri help them to mediate dual language and culture demands. I conclude that teachers like Delores and Terri help students to read the context of situations and make appropriate language choice decisions based on attendant situations and necessary circumstance. Suggestions for further research are presented as well. Finally, I offer implications for educators, especially those in the Waterloo school district, as well as preservice teachers and individuals affiliated with teacher education programs.

Curriculum and Language Use Situated within Historical and Political Context

Nearly one third of Waterloo's school children share a unique African American history. As discussed in chapter III of this study, the Black community in Waterloo, Iowa, is rooted to communities in rural Holmes and Attatala counties in Mississippi. The majority of community members have relatives who, as part of the Great Migration, came to Waterloo in search of economic opportunity. Ties to the rural Delta in Mississippi have remained strong and constant. The migration continues as relatives and friends journey along the same route first traveled by early southern immigrants to Waterloo. Marcus, the principal focal student in this study, evidences the fact that movement between Waterloo, Iowa, and Delta towns in Mississippi, still continues. He and others like him are part of a modern day migration.

Despite the fact that the Black community has been established in Waterloo for nearly 75 years, the community itself has remained oppressed and relatively segregated since its beginnings in 1915 within the larger Waterloo community. The heritage of Waterloo's vibrant Black community, rooted in rural Mississippi, is not recognized, validated or respected. Black community members share little power within the community at large.

The members of Waterloo's Black community, including children, speak Black English. Black English is a viable language with all the regular features of a language. As differences exist between the varieties of Black English spoken in both Waterloo and Mississippi, children who come to Waterloo directly from Mississippi speak differently than children whose families have been in Waterloo for a long time. While Black English is widely spoken and has been maintained at Carver and within Waterloo's Black community, it has yet to gain acceptance and validation within the wider Waterloo community.

Jackie Parker, Belinda Jackson, Vanessa Carson Hart, Delores Fox and Terri Hall confirm that language classification, the notion that individuals are judged and labeled according to their speech patterns (Christensen, 1994), is alive and well within the Waterloo School District. An historical pattern has developed within the district; Black children are failing at an alarming rate and district officials are ignoring this failure. Given the dismal status of Black students in Waterloo, it is surprising that culture and language differences are not being addressed by the school district's professional development program.

During my tenure in the Waterloo schools, inservice attention was paid to curriculum renewal, Madeline Hunter's Effective Schooling Model and most recently, creating grade-level benchmarks and standards of achievement. The school district has yet to seriously address language diversity as it relates to the Black Community.

Marcus's experiences represent the historical and political layers of the nesting design of this study. A student like Marcus must negotiate the demands of his various speech communities in order to be successful in school, at home and within his immediate community as well as American society at large. Teachers like Delores and Terri assist Marcus and students like him, and help negotiate the specific demands that each layer of the nest represents. Thus, they are mediators in his language learning.

Marcus "cuts through the layers" of the nest and encounters the demands of each, the language classification of American society at large, the historical-political context of Waterloo's distinct communities, the pedagogical aspect of his schooling and the experiences he has gained at Carver Elementary. His teachers are there to support and guide him (See Figure 6). Marcus makes the leap described by Belinda Jackson as he adjusts his language to school, his church, neighborhood and his respective communities. "When I'm at home, that what I call Mississippi, I get asked why I talk like I do. So I change to be like them." Marcus's words perfectly illustrate why he code-switches; his words articulate the sociocultural demands he faces.

Delores and Terri acknowledge the special history of Waterloo's African American community. Their curriculum

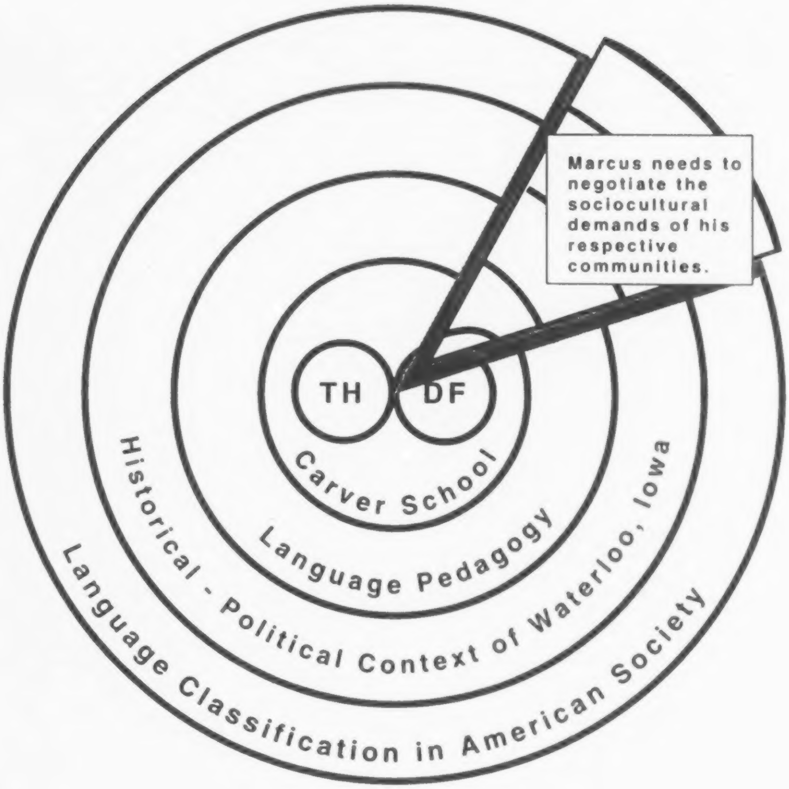
Marcus needs to negotiate the sociocultural demands of his respective communities.
TH
DF
Carver School
Language Pedagogy
Historical - Political Context of Waterloo, Iowa
Language Classification in American Society

Figure 6. Language Demands Faced by Marcus

validates, celebrates even, the unique connection to Mississippi. Each teacher makes an effort to stock her respective classroom with appropriate literature. Their classroom climates reflect students' heritage and their very use of Black English is significant in terms of the message such use conveys.

Employing Specific Discourse Patterns from the African American Community in Classrooms

"What teachers actually **do** when engaged in the act of teaching is motivated by what they **believe** about learners and what they **believe** about the processes that underlie learning" (Cambourne, 1988, p.17). What teachers do in the classroom makes a huge difference in the lives of their students. At the onset of this study, I assumed that teachers were in pivotal positions to assist their students, but I did not know exactly how these two educators taught language or what kind of a difference they made in their students' language acquisition.

"The most salient and important variable in a student's education is the teacher" (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997, p. 82). Descriptions of teaching practices rendered in the previous chapter provide insight into how two teachers at Carver Elementary help students read the context of their situations and negotiate the demands of their respective language communities. This study makes several contributions to our understanding of the role of teachers as mediators in African American children's language acquisition.

At the core of Delores and Terri's practice is the issue of attitude. These educators respect the multiple forms and uses of language found in their classrooms. Culture matters! They understand individual differences and the contexts in which students code-switch. Their classrooms and their practice are culturally relevant to their African American students. They do their best to ensure that they create classroom environments where students can live in both an African American world and a mainstream world. Delores and Terri recognize that their African American students communicate with specific response styles and linguistic styles. Figure 7 identifies two distinct speech communities in Waterloo and illustrates the language knowledge both teachers and students need to know in order to be successful in both the Black English-speaking and the standard English-speaking communities in Waterloo. Successful teachers of African American students often "travel a different route to ensure the growth and development of their students" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 15).

Delores and Terri affirm the language of the majority of their African American students. They recognize it, acknowledge that it differs from the language of the mainstream, and through their own diglossia, dignify Black English as a language. They possess what I term an

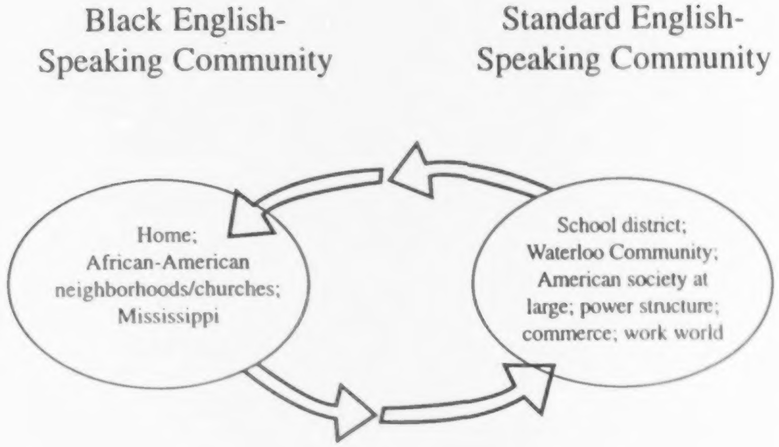
Black English-Speaking Community
Standard English-Speaking Community
Home; African-American neighborhoods/churches; Mississippi
School district; Waterloo Community; American society at large; power structure; commerce; work world

Figure 7. Language Knowledge in Two Speech Communities

acceptance perspective. As educators of a majority Black population, they embrace their language teaching demands; they view Black English as a language yet they also accept the responsibility of teaching standard English to all of their students. Delores and Terri do not just acknowledge difference and leave it at that, however. "*Accept* students but also take responsibility to *teach* them" could easily be the credo of these two educators (Delpit, 1995, p. 38).

However, unlike the prevailing attitude among bilingual educators that students benefit from language instruction in both languages, and due to the sociopolitical climate in American society exemplified by the response and backlash produced by the Ebonics debate in Oakland, I wonder if it will ever be possible for Waterloo educators such as Delores and Terri to actually teach Black English in the classroom. When Riney (1990, 1993) initially claimed that Black English populations were present in Iowa and therefore could pose instructional dilemmas, he was confronted with denial at NCU in Central Heights, in adjoining Waterloo, and with the Iowa Department of Education's racial equity consultant who stated that Black English populations were not present in Iowa. This is anecdotal evidence that the existence of Black English continues to be ignored. "VBE [Black English] in Iowa has never been publicly acknowledged or studied" (Riney, 1993, p. 84).

In fact, Riney asserts that searches through existing descriptive language studies that included Iowa did not even mention the existence of Black English in Iowa. If the language difference of nearly 30% of Waterloo's school children is, in fact, ignored by the local and state educational leaders, what kind of message is conveyed to the African American population that calls Waterloo home?

It is not a novel concept to use a child's primary language to help him or her learn another secondary language, yet the Waterloo school system has yet to acknowledge that a language difference exists. The next time questions are asked within the district about addressing the success/failure rate of African American children, perhaps language will be considered as a factor and the knowledge gap that many teachers possess regarding language diversity, specifically Black English, will be addressed.

The district as an entity has accommodated the language spoken by its Mexican American children and the language of the recent influx of Bosnian refugee children. Programs have been implemented to help these children negotiate the differences in language and culture in Waterloo's schools. When will the bicultural demands of Waterloo's many African American children be recognized? The Black community in Waterloo is a 75-year-old community. When will the language needs of its students be considered? Ignoring the language of a culture leads to an isolation that is detrimental to everyone. Ladson-Billings writes "the public schools have yet to demonstrate a sustained effort to provide quality education for African Americans (1994, p. 4). Although she was referring to American schools in general her comments aptly apply to the Waterloo School District. "Given the long history of the poor academic performance of African American students, one might ask why almost no literature exists to address their special educational needs. One reason is a stubborn refusal in American education to recognize African Americans as a distinct cultural group" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 9).

Teachers like Delores and Terri dignify Black English as a viable language system and subsequent identity marker, and validate it by using the language system during classroom instruction. Both educators make a conscious effort to culturally connect to their African American students by speaking Black English in the classroom. For Delores, who is African American, the connection is natural. Terri, who is White, speaks Black English as a way to gain acceptance from her African American students.

Carver emerged as a very unique school within the district. The majority Black student population at Carver shapes the attitudes and beliefs of the teachers who work there, forcing many teachers to reconsider their attitudes toward language and culture. Carver is a panacea of sorts in that Delores and Terri's classrooms and practices fit with the rest of the school culture. Delores and Terri were not working in opposition to the overall climate of the school although their pedagogy would be in opposition to other elementary schools in the rest of the district.

Delores and Terri have invented a pedagogy designed to meet the specific language needs of their majority African American students. First and foremost, they validate Black English and therefore Black culture by understanding and accepting Black English as a language. Their attitudes illustrate that they understand sociocultural aspects of language. Next, they provide their students with specific demonstrations of how to code-switch appropriately. Acknowledging the verbal nature of their students, using antiphonal response as an instructional strategy, and accepting standard English approximations, rather than correcting Black English, are all markers of their discourse patterns and stylized use of code-switching. In addition, both teachers use a very direct management style and possess a great deal of knowledge about teaching reading and writing.

These two teachers act as mediators in the students' zones of proximal development as they provide assistance in language acquisition. "The most important learning for African American children in the classroom is that mediated by people--their teachers and their peers" (Hale, 1994, p. 216). Through their constant demonstrations they mediate language learning. "Demonstrations need to be repeated again and again to allow for engagement and reengagement to occur until the learner has taken sufficient from the demonstration to make it a part of his repertoire of skills and/or knowledge" (Cambourne, 1988, p. 49).

As a child, Delores had to learn to culture and code-switch; as an adult teacher working at Carver, Terri needed to learn to code and culture switch. For the focal students in this study, knowledge of language of both communities is essential. Marcus is "making the leap," as are Desiree and DiVonte. Chloe is struggling, and while other variables affect her success in school, Chloe's language is appropriate for her home, neighborhood and the local Black community. Chloe needs to make the leap between her community and the mainstream community.

Inventing Theory and Pedagogy

Delores and Terri have invented their own language equity pedagogy in response to the needs of their students, thus building their own theories about teaching consistent with the theories of Vygotsky, (1986), Banks (1991), and Goodman (1986; 1992). First, Delores and Terri follow a Vygotskian model of pedagogy as they collaborate, provide direction and assist children through demonstrations of language use and competency. The teachers engage children in collaborative activities within the classroom culture. According to Vygotsky (1987), a major role of schools is to foster social contexts or zones for mastery and conscious awareness of such cultural tools as language. "What children can perform collaboratively or with assistance today they can perform independently and competently tomorrow" (Moll, 1990, p. 3).

Second, their theoretical stance is consistent with Goodman's (1986, 1992) invention-convention theory. The conventions of American education and American society demand that teachers of Black English-speaking students teach standard English. Simultaneously, the realities of Delores and Terri's teaching at Carver require them to use Black English. Thus, they must mediate the tensions between Black English and standard English use and the tensions between home and school culture that surface in their classrooms.

Finally, the language teaching practices in these two classrooms adhere to Banks' (1991) model of multicultural education. His model calls for content integration, a practice documented in these two classrooms and knowledge construction, when teachers mediate cultural assumptions and frames of reference. Banks claims that an equity pedagogy exists when teachers adjust and shape practice in order to facilitate academic achievement. Culturally relevant teaching is a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 17).

I developed a language equity pedagogy model (see Figure 8) that explains these two educators' pedagogy and leads directly to Bank's assertion that when the conditions of content integration, knowledge construction and equity pedagogy exist, a classroom and school culture are created that empower students from diverse racial and ethnic groups (Banks, 1991). My model expands Banks' theory and is directed specifically at the unique language needs of African American students who speak Black English and attend Carver Elementary in Waterloo, Iowa. The ovals in the model represent the two speech communities that overlap in the classroom. Within the ovals are the sociocultural demands of both the Black English-speaking community and the standard English-speaking communities of Waterloo, Iowa. Both teachers and children alike must recognize that within the homes, neighborhoods and churches of Waterloo's Black community as well as in the origins of this community, the rural Delta of Mississippi, Black English is appropriate and expected. And, both teachers and children must also recognize that the school district and the Waterloo community at large, indicative of commerce, the work world and the power structure of American society at large, demand the use of standard English. The arrow symbolizes how the specifically bulleted teaching strategies mediate language use in the classroom community. It is in the classrooms of

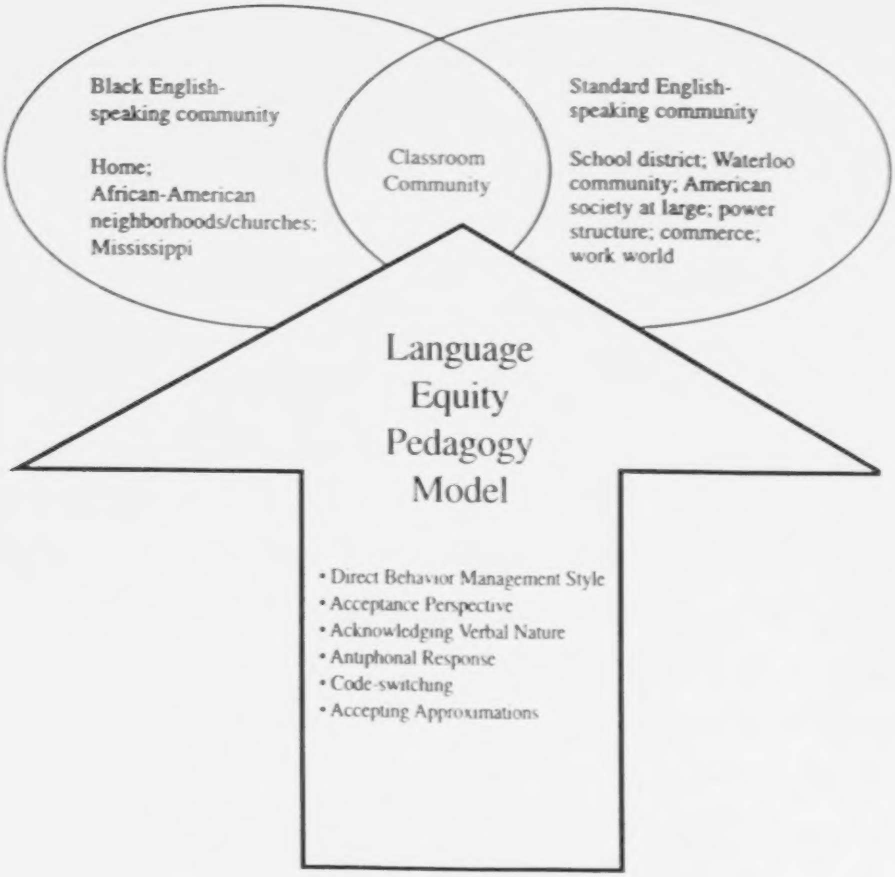
Black English-speaking community
Home;
African-American neighborhoods/churches;
Mississippi
Classroom Community
Standard English-speaking community
School district; Waterloo community; American society at large; power structure; commerce; work world
Language Equity Pedagogy Model
• Direct Behavior Management Style
• Acceptance Perspective
• Acknowledging Verbal Nature
• Antiphonal Response
• Code-switching
• Accepting Approximations

Figure 8. Language Equity Pedagogy Model

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these two educators that the language and cultural demands of the respective communities converge and are negotiated. These two teachers invented pedagogy to meet the demands of the multiple speech communities represented in the classroom. Their specific pedagogy helps students to read the context of different sociocultural situations and respond in an expected and appropriate manner. Delores and Terri see their jobs as making sure that their students can use both their home language, Black English, and standard English, the language of commerce. They facilitate student learning by capitalizing on the students' own social and cultural backgrounds.

Research Implications

The special and rare speech island of rural Mississippi Black English that exists in Waterloo (Riney, 1990, 1993) merits further investigation as pockets of African Americans surrounded by majority White populations also exist in other urban cities in Iowa and the Midwest. Linguistic studies are suggested. The existence of such speech islands in Iowa and throughout the Midwest could be documented and included on comprehensive dialect maps. Carver Elementary is a rich data collection site where researchers could address questions like: How are language and culture differences utilized within schools as opposed to classrooms? The speech origins of other Black communities could be further documented and in-depth student interviewing could be accomplished.

Research sites like Carver Elementary provide prime opportunities for further research studies about Black English and critical pedagogy designed to facilitate the success of African American children in American education.

Different layers of the nest described in this study merit further investigation. Whole schools within the Waterloo district with similar populations as Carver could initiate study groups among parents, teachers and children to explore language and culture differences. Further studies could also focus on the language and experiences of White children in majority Black schools and classrooms. And finally, studies that explore the overlap of sociocultural demands in classrooms, how some classroom environments and how teachers instruct children to read context and speak accordingly could be designed and implemented. Such studies are meritous and needed. Finally, the notion that many African American children are bilingual could and should be studied.

Teaching Implications

This study suggests that pedagogical strategies employed by Terri and Delores improve and increase the language learning of the African American students they teach. Clearly, such practice must begin with an attitude of accepting the verbal nature of African American students and their distinctive African American cultural expressions. Banks (1991) and Carson Hart assert that too many educators stop at the awareness or acceptance level. Both educators illustrate that the implementation of a direct behavior management style (Hale-Benson, 1986; Delpit, 1995), is a specific, culturally relevant and appropriate practice. The use of such strategies as antiphonal response, code-switching, and accepting approximations of standard English may very well be appropriate for educators who find themselves teaching similar students in like situations. Like Banks' (1991) equity pedagogy model, the language equity pedagogy model that resulted from this study offers empowerment to the African American children enrolled in Terri and Delores's classrooms.

Engaging students in a theme study of Mississippi and the Great Migration route would validate the history of the Black community in immeasurable ways, particularly if it were to include understanding of the community's Mississippi origins and roots with the church. Literacy skills needed to accomplish map reading would also be enhanced if study of the Great Migration became part of the elementary district curriculum. Economics on an elementary level could also become part of curriculum. Such curriculum development would instill a sense of pride and accomplishment within African American children in Waterloo that is currently absent. Presently, there is a movement within the Black Community to establish an African American Museum of History. This offers a rare opportunity to involve school-aged children in a significant historical event. Children could engage in ethnographic research projects, interview older relatives and friends to complete oral histories and seek out family heirlooms, photographs and other artifacts such as quilts and African American memorabilia that could become part of the museum's collection. Individuals could also create museums within schools.

University and school collaborations could become an accepted and prevailing practice in the effort to prepare preservice teachers to teach in urban environments. Educators like Delores and Terri could become coresearchers in studies similar to this one. Families could be interviewed to add rich insight into the appropriate preparation of Waterloo school children to face the ever increasing demands of American society. Finally, funds of knowledge contained, maintained and espoused by the Black community in Waterloo, especially the funds of knowledge African American children possess, could be recognized as a resource for the rest of the district and Waterloo community.

Implications for Teacher Education

Finally, this study contains provocative implications for teacher education programs. "We all carry worlds in our heads, and those worlds are decidedly different. We educators set out to teach, but how can we reach the worlds of others when we do not even know they exist?" (Delpit, 1995, p. xiv). As Delpit maintains, White, mainstream teacher education candidates rarely learn about language and cultural diversity in teacher education programs. Carver and other schools with significant ethnic minority populations within the Waterloo system could serve as on-going, field-based teacher preparation sites for teacher education candidates at nearby NCU. Field experiences, practicums and university-sponsored clinics especially in the areas of writing and reading based at Waterloo schools could be mutually beneficial and reciprocal arrangements that would provide additional services for elementary children and practical experiences for preservice teachers. It is my assumption that at the teacher preparation level, language and cultural diversity receive only a passing mention, not in-depth exploration. Culturally relevant behavior management must be included in preservice education programs.

Implications for the Waterloo School District

The Waterloo schools could systematically include the topic of language and cultural diversity in staff development and look to the parents in Waterloo's Black community as resident experts. Community leaders like Jackie Parker could be invited into schools like Carver to observe teachers like Delores and Terri in an effort to reduce the distrust that exists between the school district and the communities, especially the Black community, in which it is located. Additionally, the issue of culturally relevant behavior management needs to be explored, especially when suspension, expulsion, and dropout rates of African American students in Waterloo is considered..

My Journey Continues

I am not a linguist, and I am not an anthropologist although this study borrowed heavily from both disciplines. On my path toward becoming a researcher, I learned a great deal about language and culture from observing both Delores and Terri teaching and learning with their students. My greatest lesson was that language is the epicenter of our identities. By spending time with them, I was reminded of much I already knew but had forgotten.

My greatest reminder was to remember to learn from children. I am not an expert about Black English or Black culture, nor do I pretend to be, but I have been undeniably changed by my experiences with both. One day, a small child jarred any illusions of grandeur I may have developed as a result of my study. I was leaving Carver after an afternoon observation period and as I strode down the hall, a little girl, familiar with me called out, “Tie’ shoes!” Confused, I looked down at my brand new black and white Skechers, a brand of tennis shoes with a style that looks like 1950’s black and white saddle shoes. Perplexed, I told her that my shoelaces were tied. Putting her tiny hands on her miniature hips, she replied, "I said, Tight shoes." She looked at me, my shoes and giggled.

My face burned with embarrassment as I realized she had said "tight shoes" meaning cool shoes and was paying me a compliment. "Having learned to see with different eyes has permanently changed what I am able to see" says Delpit (1995, p. 75). No doubt, early in my career I would have wondered at the intellectual capacity of that child. Now I realize that I will always need to be cognizant of my own lack of knowledge and to always consider the knowledge of my students. My journey as a teacher, a learner and as a researcher continues.

What will happen at Carver Elementary in Waterloo, Iowa, in the future may depend a great deal on what has happened in the past. Delpit claims that "by some estimates the turn of the century will find up to forty percent nonwhite children in American classrooms" (1995, p. 105). As I write this, that date is just around the corner. Certainly Waterloo and all of America are large enough for several prominent languages and cultures. In light of the growing level of diversity that is redefining our classrooms and schools on a yearly, monthly and even a daily basis, embracing that diversity and meeting the challenges that such diversity presents is essential.

We can look at Carver, its children and two educators who taught there, learn from their example and see how two cultures and languages can coexist. We can look to Delores and Terri's pedagogy and see how African American children are affirmed and challenged. Ladson-Billings informs us that "in most . . . communities of color it is neither the national commissions, the state boards, nor the local districts that affect the education of the students, it is the teacher" (1994, p. 80). She further contends that, "there are some good teachers out there who can help African American students choose academic excellence and yet not compromise their cultural identities" (1994, p. 127). Delorea and Terri are two such teachers and the children in their classrooms are affirmed and excell without cultural compromise. There is nothing more important than our children and teachers are at the heart of learning.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF DISTINCT LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF BLACK ENGLISH

1. Negation pattern: forms the negative in the past tense which can be continuous or momentary but, also, tense can be entirely omitted from BE.

Example: *she don' go to church* or *I know her* (momentary)
she don' be goin' to church or *I been knowing her* (continuous)
The use of *don'*, *ain'* and *dit'n* mark past tense with the [*in'*] ending added to verbs also marking tense.

2. Intonational variation and initial unstressed syllable are present in BE.

Example: variation such as the first syllable stress in *po-lice* (standard po-lice, stress on second syllable) and *'cepptance* (standard acceptance).

3. Zero copula.

Example: A sentence for instance such as *She ugly.* or *She gone.* for She's ugly or She is gone.

4. No pronoun reference.

Example: *John car* (John's car) or *Patrick dog* (Patrick's dog) and in very young emergent BE speakers, there may exist an undifferentiated pronoun such as the following *He a nice girl* or *Her put it back* .

5. Grammatical categories of Phase and Aspect are also present in BE.

Example: *My dog sick.* (the dog is currently ill and the illness is of short term duration) and *My dog be sick.* (indicates long term illness).

6. Different distributions of prepositions.

Example: *Get out the house.* instead of the more standard (Get out of the house.). *We goin' over to Grandma house.* (We're going over to Grandma's house.) and *Here go a plate.* (Here is a plate). Note--pidgins generally have a smaller number of prepositions or a universal preposition.

7. Low front vowel.

Example: *mutha'* instead of mother or *sucka'* instead of sucker.

8. Lengthened [a] sound.

Example: *ah* as opposed to I.

9. Initial [th] of the, them, this, that, there, and these is [d].

Example: *da* (the), *dem* (them), *dis* (this), *dat* (that), *dere* (there) *and dese* (these).

10. Final [th] sounding as an [f].

Example: the final [th] in mouth, bath and with is [f] , such as *mouf, baff and wif* however the less elegant form of these words ends in a [t] *wit.*

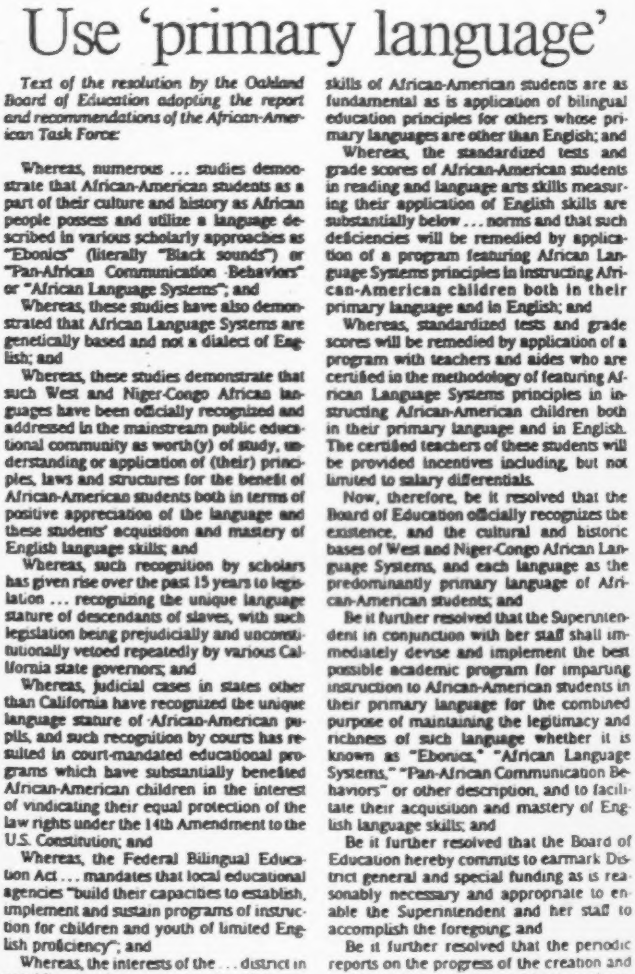
11. Double use of ed in past tense.

Example: *I likted her.* (which in standard might be I liked her) or *She is light skinneded.* in standard English it might be She is light skinned.

(Dillard, J., 1972; Labov, W., 1972)

APPENDIX B

OAKLAND RESOLUTION



Use ‘primary language’

Text of the resolution by the Oakland Board of Education adopting the report and recommendations of the African-American Task Force:

Whereas, numerous ... studies demonstrate that African-American students as a part of their culture and history as African people possess and utilize a language described in various scholarly approaches as "Ebonics" (literally "Black sounds") or "Pan-African Communication Behaviors" or "African Language Systems"; and

Whereas, these studies have also demonstrated that African Language Systems are genetically based and not a dialect of English; and

Whereas, these studies demonstrate that such West and Niger-Congo African languages have been officially recognized and addressed in the mainstream public educational community as worth(y) of study, understanding or application of (their) principles, laws and structures for the benefit of African-American students both in terms of positive appreciation of the language and these students' acquisition and mastery of English language skills; and

Whereas, such recognition by scholars has given rise over the past 15 years to legislation ... recognizing the unique language stature of descendants of slaves, with such legislation being prejudicially and unconstitutionally vetoed repeatedly by various California state governors; and

Whereas, judicial cases in states other than California have recognized the unique language stature of African-American pupils, and such recognition by courts has resulted in court-mandated educational programs which have substantially benefited African-American children in the interest of vindicating their equal protection of the law rights under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; and

Whereas, the Federal Bilingual Education Act ... mandates that local educational agencies "build their capacities to establish, implement and sustain programs of instruction for children and youth of limited English proficiency"; and

Whereas, the interests of the ... district in providing equal opportunities for all its students dictate limited English proficient educational programs recognizing the English language acquisition and improvement skills of African-American students are as fundamental as is application of bilingual education principles for others whose primary languages are other than English; and

Whereas, the standardized tests and grade scores of African-American students in reading and language arts skills measuring their application of English skills are substantially below ... norms and that such deficiencies will be remedied by application of a program featuring African Language Systems principles in instructing African-American children both in their primary language and in English; and

Whereas, standardized tests and grade scores will be remedied by application of a program with teachers and aides who are certified in the methodology of featuring African Language Systems principles in instructing African-American children both in their primary language and in English. The certified teachers of these students will be provided incentives including, but not limited to salary differentials.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Education officially recognizes the existence, and the cultural and historic bases of West and Niger-Congo African Language Systems, and each language as the predominantly primary language of African-American students; and

Be it further resolved that the Superintendent in conjunction with her staff shall immediately devise and implement the best possible academic program for imparting instruction to African-American students in their primary language for the combined purpose of maintaining the legitimacy and richness of such language whether it is known as "Ebonics," "African Language Systems," "Pan-African Communication Behaviors" or other description, and to facilitate their acquisition and mastery of English language skills; and

Be it further resolved that the Board of Education hereby commits to earmark District general and special funding as is reasonably necessary and appropriate to enable the Superintendent and her staff to accomplish the foregoing; and

Be it further resolved that the periodic reports on the progress of the creation and implementation of such an educational program shall be made to the Board of Education at least once per month commencing at the Board meeting of December 18, 1996

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APPENDIX C

DISTINCTIVE AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS OFTEN AT ODDS WITH SCHOOL CULTURE

a). use of expressive, stylistic language;

b). body adornment such as ways of dressing or wearing clothes and hair styles;

c). dance and song;

d). motor habits such as ways of walking, talking, sitting and movement;

e). emotional, expressive styles of religious and spiritual worship;

f). folklore;

g). concept of time;

h). performance styles that incorporate call and response styles or antiphonal response, and

i). collective responsibility and interdependence.

(Hale-Benson, J., 1986, p. 11)

APPENDIX D

JACKIE PARKER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

J. Parker Interview File #INTJP062897
Saturday, June 28, 1997

Describe the state of education for African American children in Waterloo, IA.

How well-prepared do you think the typical White Waterloo school teacher is about cultural and language diversity?

What can/should the district do to address equity issues?

What is your view or perspective on Black English? Do you view it as nonexistent? A vernacular? A dialect? A separate language? A cultural identity marker?

How do you see language or linguistic diversity affecting academic success?

Do you have any personal experiences you could share regarding language diversity?

What can educators at the university level do to more adequately prepare future teachers for cultural and language diversity?

APPENDIX E

WATERLOO COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives have been identified to build the momentum for progress for the district. Goals impact all staff members in some manner. The order of priority is offered for purposes of staff involvement. The following quote applies to the Waterloo Community School District relative to the importance of district goals:

"Every strategic and operational practice in our school district must contribute to a single outcome: students reaching high standards. We have launched a systemwide effort to ensure that everything we do is examined through the lens of student learning. That means every practice and procedure—from the development of bus schedules to the delivery of instruction—must result in increased learning." (The School Administrator, November, 1995.)

1. **Goal: Improve Student Achievement and Graduation Rate**

   Objective 1.1 Put into practice student achievement goals (benchmarks) for grades two, five and eight, and write the benchmarks for the remaining grades by June, 1997.

   Objective 1.2 Identify and put into practice methods to measure student performance, in addition to ITBS and ITED tests, and develop new report cards by the spring of 1997.

   Objective 1.3 Complete the examination of specific educational programs and grants by June, 1997 and place programs into practice according to their proven successes.

   Objective 1.4 Address equity issues when developing curriculum and planning for staff development.

   Objective 1.5 Emphasize active learning in curriculum development and in teaching. Design curriculum and teaching methods to match sound philosophies of elementary, middle school and high school.

   Objective 1.6 Prepare for a thorough, outside curriculum audit to be completed in 1997-98.

2. **Goal: Further Mobilize Personnel to Accomplish District's Mission**

   Objective 2.1 Put into practice the shared decision making process by involving staff and community to improve student achievement.

   Objective 2.2 Implement team building processes at the administrative level and at the school level to increase ownership of the district's mission and goals.

   Objective 2.3 Increase involvement and responsibility for improving the quality of the learning process (teaching methods and curriculum) and its environment (facilities).

   Objective 2.4 Increase the variety of instructional strategies and human relations skills to address equity issues and to address the range of student needs.

   Objective 2.5 Put into practice an effective special education model to incorporate the special education program into the district's operation.

   Objective 2.6 Implement revised job descriptions, their accompanying evaluations, and link job targets to the district's mission and goals.

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3. **Goal: Eliminate ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status as predictors of a student's academic achievement, graduation rate, testing data, discipline referrals, participation in extracurricular activities or parent involvement in the school.**

Objective 3.1 Implement recommendations from the Equity Audit Task Force.

4. **Goal: Continue to Improve District's Fiscal Condition**

Objective 4.1 Put into practice the finance plan to obtain certificates of excellence in accounting practices.

Objective 4.2 Carry out the finance plan to place the district in a debt-free and a financially solvent position.

Objective 4.3 Implement a plan to obtain a good credit rating by 1998.

5. **Goal: Develop and Implement a Capital Improvement Plan**

Objective 5.1 Implement recommendations from the Facility Usage Committee to close and/or consolidate school buildings.

Objective 5.2 Publish the long-range facility improvement plan that is based on well defined educational outcomes and plans for community use.

Objective 5.3 Implement the Physical Plant and Equipment Levy.

6. **Goal: Communicate and Expand the District's Educational Image**

Objective 6.1 The Waterloo Schools will be named as a district where students receive the best education in this metro area by a majority of those surveyed in the general public in 2000.

Objective 6.2 The leadership of the Waterloo Community Schools will be perceived as being effective by a majority of those surveyed in 1997. (Follow-up of the Bill Attea report.)

Objective 6.3 Increase by 50% the involvement of parents and community members in the schools by June, 1997.

Objective 6.4 Implement an internal program for the improvement of staff morale and pride by June, 1997.

Adopted by the Board of Directors on July 15, 1996.

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APPENDIX F

MISSION STATEMENT CARVER SCHOOL

The mission of
Carver Elementary School
is to provide
the highest quality education,
involving the entire community,
which prepares each student
to function successfully throughout life
in an increasingly complex world.

Goals:

1. To improve student achievement in the areas of comprehension and reading.

2. To improve student achievement in the area of math, including basic facts, computation and problem solving

3. To create a climate involving parents, staff, and students that will be conducive to maximizing learning.

4. To increase students' skills in their use of technology

APPENDIX G

BELINDA JACKSON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Waterloo Central Administrator Interview File #BS022197
Belinda Jackson
Friday, February 21, 1997
8:00 AM

Briefly state your educational background and educational work experience.

What is your philosophy of education?

Describe the state of education for the African American child in the Waterloo school district.

What makes Carver unique?

What is your view or perspective on Black English?

What is your opinion of what Jim Day is doing at Longfellow?

What do you think about the Ebonics debate in Oakland?

What can/should the Waterloo district do to address issue of language diversity, difference and diglossia?

What can teacher education at the University level do to improve knowledge and understanding of language diversity?

APPENDIX H

VANESSA CARSON HART INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Carver Administrator Interview File # INTLCH050597
Vanessa Carson Hart
Monday, May 5, 1997 10:00 A.M.

Briefly state your educational and educational work background.

What is your philosophy of education?

Describe the state of education for the African American child in Waterloo.

What makes Carver unique as a school?

What is your view or perspective on Black English?

What is your opinion of what Day is doing at Longfellow School?

How do/did you view the Ebonics debate in Oakland?

What can/should the Waterloo district do to address language diversity?

What can educators at the university level do to more adequately prepare teachers for linguistic diversity?

APPENDIX I

DELORES FOX AND TERRI HALL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Carver Teacher Interviews   File # INTDFTH030797
Delores Fox
Terri Hall
Friday, March 7, 1997

What is your philosophy of education?

Describe the state of education for African American children in the Waterloo Community School system.

What makes Carver unique, now and in the past?

What is your perspective on Black English?

What could and should the Waterloo district do to address issue of language difference, diversity and diglossia?

What can be done to improve teacher education so as to address these issues?

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